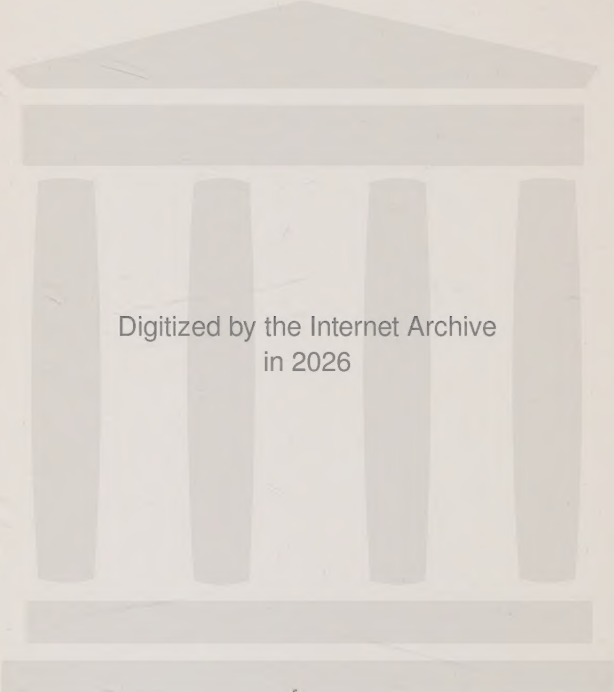
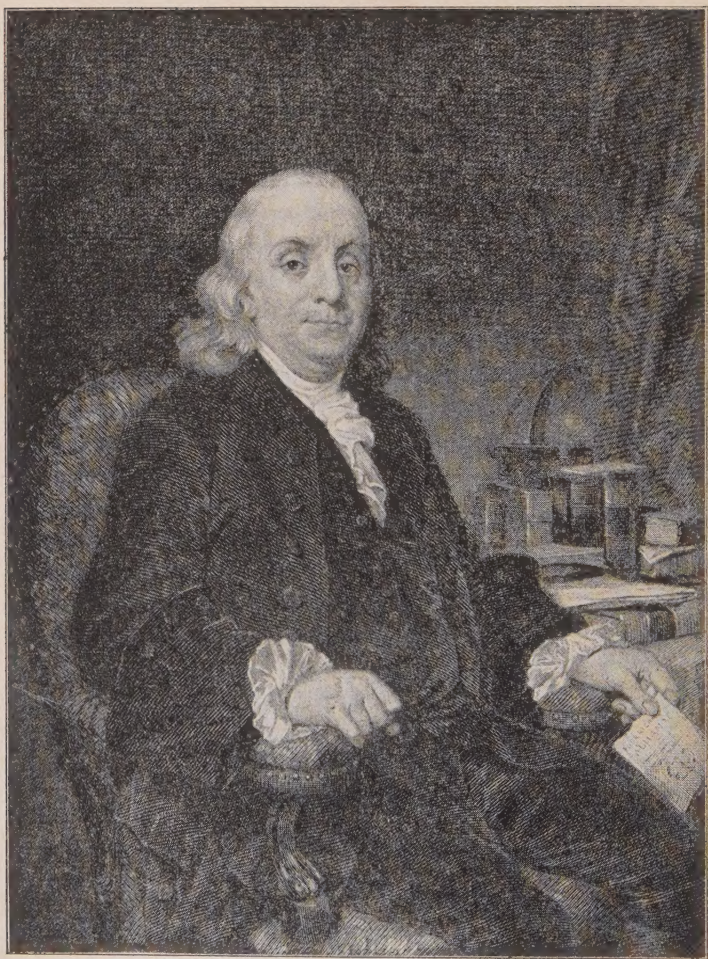




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Benjamin Franklin

Great Americans of History

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A CHARACTER SKETCH

BY

FRANK STRONG, A. M., Ph. D.

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WITH SUPPLEMENTARY ESSAY, BY

G. MERCER ADAM

Late Editor of "Self-Culture" Magazine, Etc., Etc.

AND A CHARACTER STUDY, BY

PROF. CHARLES K. EDMUNDS, Ph. D.

of Johns Hopkins University

TOGETHER WITH

ANECDOTES, CHARACTERISTICS, AND CHRONOLOGY.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

BY FRANK STRONG, PH.D.



EVERY visitor to Boston who has the historical spirit, walks up Milk Street, near the Old South Church, to view the tablet which marks the birthplace of Benjamin Franklin. The day which saw Benjamin ushered into this vale of tears was, according to old style, January 6th, new style January 17th, 1706.

Benjamin's father, Josiah Franklin, was blessed with more than his share of pledges to fortune, Benjamin having no fewer than sixteen brothers and sisters, some of them being of the half blood. Josiah came of good English stock of Northamptonshire, where the Franklins owned a small farm and a smithy which regularly descended to the eldest son, while the youngest son served as apprentice.

Benjamin was the youngest son of the youngest son for many generations back. Not far away lived the ancestors of another great American who was associated with Franklin in the most momentous struggle that has engaged the attention of the American continent—George Washington. But there was a great difference in the station of the two families; the Washingtons were of

gentle blood, while the Franklins were brawny smiths or farmers. Even then the Franklins had the sturdy independence of which men are made. They turned early to the Protestant faith, or perhaps were descended from the French Protestants, and in Bloody Mary's time they persisted in the reading of the Bible, concealing it by fastening the book under the top of a joint stool. Thus while one of the children watched, the father of the household turned over the stool and read the precious words which peril only sanctified.

In the time of Charles II, Josiah Franklin and Benjamin, his favorite brother, broke with the rest of the family by abandoning the Church of England and espousing the cause of the Dissenters. On this account Josiah left England about the year 1685 and removed to Boston.

Benjamin also came of good stock on his mother's side. Her name was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger who settled in Watertown in 1635. He was noted for his missionary labors among the Indians, and showed his liberal spirit and opposition to persecution by becoming a Baptist minister.

Franklin's biographers seem agreed that he derived from his mother his physical traits, while it seems certain that he derived from his maternal grandfather his hatred of bigotry and helpful nature. The most distinguishing quality of mind that Benjamin possessed—clear, sound common sense—he got from his father, whom he speaks of as having this quality in a marked degree. Josiah was handsome, cheerful and accomplished. He was musical and sang to his family of an

evening, accompanying himself on his violin. Benjamin held these evenings as happy spots in his memory, and he often referred to them when an old man. The home life, therefore, was affectionate and inspiring.

Benjamin had been named after Josiah's favorite brother, who still remained in England. The elder was of a literary turn, and this fact probably had a very important bearing on his nephew, for the uncle afterward lived in the same house for years. He left two quarto volumes of his poetry, some of it written for his nephew whom he very early (at seven years) encouraged to court the muses. In 1713 he sent the boy lines as follows:

" 'Tis time for me to throw aside my pen,
When hanging sleeves read, write and rhyme like men.
This forward spring foretells a plenteous crop;
For if the bud bear grain, what will the top?"

Sparks says: "These lines are more prophetic, perhaps, than the writer imagined."

Benjamin's father intended him for a preacher, and he was sent to the Boston Grammar School. But the boy hankered after the life of a sailor. Josiah had already lost one son by his running away to sea, and, fearful of losing another, as a sort of compromise Benjamin was set at "dipping wicks and pouring grease," for his father was a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler. This was when the boy had arrived at the mature age of ten years.

He was not very industrious, on account of which his father quoted to him Solomon's proverb about the dili-

gent man standing before Kings. He spent a good deal of time in swimming and invented swimming devices, and again, by flying a kite made it draw him across the pond of water on his back.

He remained with his father for three years, with some diversion at intervals by reading the few books which he procured by much ingenuity and self-sacrifice. He loved best Bunyan's immortal Allegory. He purchased Burton's Historical Collections and Cotton Mathew's "Essays to do Good," and no doubt the "Boston Newsletter," America's only newspaper, then about as large as a sheet of modern foolscap.

This tendency seemed to give the father a dim notion that the boy was worthy of something better than the greasy trade in which he was employed. Therefore he was apprenticed when thirteen years old to his older brother James, who was a printer. This was not done, however, until the boy had been taken to the shops of joiners, bricklayers, turners, etc., that he might get an idea of what trade he would like best, so anxious was the father to keep the boy from the sea.

Benjamin soon learned the printing trade and became a valuable hand. Not only that, but he got access to better books and often sat up most of the night to read, when he had borrowed a book or surreptitiously taken it for a night's reading.

He tried his hand at poetry, for it was the time of street ballads on the exploits of pirates, on shipwrecks and murders. This production was printed by his brother and sold. But he was saved from becoming a poet

to which his vanity now led him, by his father, who told him that verse makers were generally beggars.

He then turned to putting down his thoughts in prose, and by the aid of his father and an odd volume of the "Spectator," succeeded in correcting his faults of composition. Lacking a vocabulary, he took parts of the "Spectator" and making a mere sketch of them, afterward tried to put them into good English. By comparing these efforts with the original, he made rapid progress.

He early avoided attendance on public worship and while a mere boy, from reading Collins, Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, became very unorthodox. Three years after he was apprenticed he obtained a book on vegetable diet, and, with some liking for the perverse, became a vegetarian. In this way he saved part of the expense of his board, and got a little money for books.

From reading Xenophon's "Memorable Things of Socrates," he took up the Socratic method of disputation which helped to crystalize his style; and at the same time he learned from Socrates that courteous manner which is so valuable to a disputant.

James Franklin published the "New England Courant," one of the earliest newspapers in America, and Benjamin, unbeknown to his brother, wrote occasional pieces for it which he stuck under the door of the shop. These were accepted and praised without their author being suspected, and this led Benjamin to believe in his own power to influence men by his pen. But he received from his brother more blows than was altogether

agreeable, and he therefore sought an occasion of escaping his apprenticeship. He found it when his brother was arrested for some political article in his paper which was displeasing to the Assembly, and forbidden to longer publish the "Courant."

As a subterfuge the paper was published in the name of Benjamin Franklin, and the first indentures of apprenticeship cancelled and new ones secretly given. Under the new management the paper flourished as never before. Taking advantage of the opportunity, and under strong feeling because of his brother's illtreatment, he left, but was prevented by James from getting work at his trade in Boston.

He secretly took ship for New York, where he arrived in October, 1723. He was then seventeen years old, with a tolerably good opinion of himself, and with a reputation in Boston of being a dangerous youth, both politically and religiously.

On his way to New York the ship stopped off Block Island to fish for cod, and Benjamin was tempted by the sweet savor of fried cod to renounce his vegetarian principles.

Finding no work in New York he started for Philadelphia, and after a voyage of thirty hours reached Perth Amboy wet, hungry, and feverish. He walked from Perth Amboy across New Jersey to Burlington, cutting such a miserable figure as to be suspected of being a runaway servant.

From Burlington he succeeded in getting a boat for Philadelphia. He reached the city on a Sunday tired

and very hungry, with only a Dutch dollar and a shilling in copper in his pocket. The shilling he gave for his passage on the boat. He was worn with fatigue and loss of sleep; his clothes were soiled and his pockets stuffed with shirts and stockings. He purchased three rolls of bread, taking one under each arm while he ate



Franklin's Arrival in Philadelphia. From Holley's "Life of Franklin." 1848.

from the other in his hand. Thus he walked up the street before the home of his future wife, who stood in the doorway and surveyed the awkward, ridiculous appearance of her future husband. Such was the manner of Franklin's beginning in Philadelphia.

There were only two printers in Philadelphia in that day, and both were poorly qualified for their trade. Franklin, therefore, found little difficulty in getting

work with one of them, Keimer by name, who probably was one of the Protestants of the Cevennes so much persecuted by Louis XIV.

Franklin's ability and originality soon made him prominent and brought him into contact with Sir Wm. Keith, governor of the Province. This acquaintance came near ending disastrously for the young man, or rather, boy, and he then first had some experience with the shifty practices of the well meaning but unscrupulous politician.

Keith tried to get Franklin to set up in business in Philadelphia, and sent him to Boston with a letter to his father urging the elder Franklin's assistance for his son. Benjamin had been away seven months, and though well received by his family, except by his brother, he did not succeed in his mission. The shrewd Josiah seems to have suspected what sort of person Sir William was, and the young man had to return with good will and advice alone, but no cash.

The ready-tongued governor, in a fit of generosity which he did not live up to, declared that as long as Benjamin's father refused, he would set the young man up himself.

He requested Franklin to make an inventory of the things needed in a printer's shop and finally urged him to go to England for the purpose of purchasing the stock at the governor's expense.

The promised letters of introduction and credit were not forthcoming before the ship sailed from Philadelphia, but being assured by Sir William that they would be

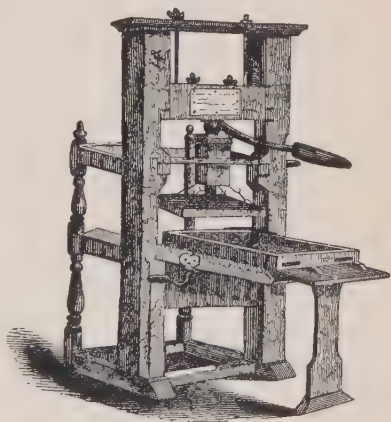
sent aboard at Newcastle, Franklin embarked. At Newcastle the supposed packet was sent aboard but on being opened later no letters were found for Benjamin Franklin. It was an indecently cruel trick to thus impose "so grossly on a poor ignorant boy" and send him to a foreign country on a useless mission. But after all the experience and knowledge thus gained were of value.

While in London he worked at his trade and led a somewhat dissipated life. His infidelity came out in a pamphlet which brought him some favor with the free-thinkers of England whose favor and society never did anybody any good. Afterward he destroyed with his own hands nearly all the 100 copies issued.

He was also urged by Sir William Wyndham, ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, to open a swimming school in London. This was a strong temptation for he was promised good

patronage, but a desire to see Philadelphia once more and the kind advice of a Mr. Denham led Franklin to refuse.

This Mr. Denham offered him a position as confidential clerk in his mercantile business to be opened in Philadelphia, and Franklin accepted. They returned to



Press used by Franklin while working at his trade in London in 1725-6. Now in the National Museum, Washington, D. C.

America together after Franklin had been absent eighteen months, reaching Philadelphia October 11th, 1726.

During the voyage to America, Franklin kept a diary and recorded several interesting scientific observations. Tears filled his eyes as he approached his native land and he seems to have been heartily glad to see America once more. The business arrangement with Mr. Denham was soon broken up by the severe illness of both. Mr. Denham died but Franklin's life was spared. He professed himself "rather disappointed" when he found he was not going to die. But Benjamin had a very practical turn of mind, and had a sufficient sense of his own importance to occupy himself afterward with his famous epitaph which is too renowned to omit:

The Body
of
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
(Like the cover of an Old Book,
Its Contents Torn Out,
And Stript of Its Lettering and Gilding,)
Lies Here, Food for worms.
Yet the work Itself Shall not Be Lost,
For It will, as He Believed, Appear Once More.
In a New
And More Beautiful Edition,
Corrected and Amended
By
The Author.

But Franklin got well of his pleurisy and returned to his old trade, this time with his old employer, Keimer. He was the life of the shop; cast type, made the ink, engraved, and bound the books. He soon left Keimer because of a quarrel and made a secret agreement with one

of Keimer's workmen, Meredith, to go into partnership as soon as they could get the tools of the trade from London.

Keimer having a chance to print paper money for New Jersey, persuaded Franklin to return for a season because he was the only one who could engrave, cast type, etc. He contrived for this job the first copper plate press in America. What was more important, he had a chance to visit Burlington and become acquainted with the influential men whose friendship proved afterward of great advantage.

He soon set up his business with Meredith, and after a few months bought from the shiftless Keimer a newspaper recently started and called "The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette." This long name being too heavy a burden for a small paper with ninety subscribers to carry, the first clause was chopped off, and being relieved of part of its burden the "Pennsylvania Gazette" began to prosper greatly. It soon became very influential, Franklin's first number being number forty issued October 2d, 1729.

It is interesting to remember that in this paper Franklin originated the modern system of business advertising that has grown to such an enormous extent.

The other printer in the town, Bradford by name, was also postmaster and refused to allow his postriders to carry Franklin's paper because he published one himself. This constituted no difficulty to Franklin whose code of ethics was of a somewhat elastic sort. He simply bribed the postriders with so liberal sums that his pa-

per gained a wide circulation and soon became extremely profitable. It was well printed, and, especially, articles of Franklin's which discussed the trouble between the Governor and Assembly of Massachusetts and foreshadowed the coming trouble of forty odd years later, brought much favor to Franklin and many subscribers to his paper. In the year 1730 the partnership with Meredith was dissolved. Even before this Franklin had formed his famous debating society called the Junto, or The Leathern Apron Club. The idea seems to have been borrowed from Cotton Mather's Benefit Societies. The members entered upon the discussion of topics which afterward became leading questions in colonial affairs. The Club soon became of very great influence and formed subordinate clubs. So began the American system of debating societies.

One of the questions taken up was that of paper money which was now coming to the front in the Province. Franklin favored the measure in his paper and to such good purpose that it carried, and he got the job of printing the money which brought him a handsome sum.

He worked very hard at this time and was not above making some show of his industry and frugality. He was now induced by friends, who were would-be match-makers, to contemplate marriage but his mercenary demand of enough dowry to pay off the debt of his printing house broke off the match.

He then turned to Miss Reade to whom he had promised himself before he went to London and whom he had conveniently forgotten. She in the meantime had mar-



Mrs. Benjamin Franklin.

ried a worthless fellow who deserted her. The affection between her and Franklin reviving, they were married September 1st, 1730.

It has seemed wise to give some space to Franklin's early life because of its very great interest and its important bearing on his subsequent career. It was, however, the least satisfactory and least to be respected part of his life. He had pretty thoroughly sown his wild oats and had been guilty of many indiscretions that, but for his correct and helpful after life and his exceeding great services to his country, would leave a blot on his reputation. In fact, if Benjamin Franklin had not at the bottom been of sound character and high aims, he would never have recovered from his early sins and mistakes; but instead we should read of another disastrous failure in life.

We have come to the turning point in his career. With his marriage a new period in his life begins; dangerous tendencies in his character disappear and the nobler elements more strongly appear. He had always been industrious; now he is frugal and steady.

His direct pungent style of writing he puts to good use and the writing of infidel essays is given over. His full stock of information which makes him a self-educated man; his breadth of mind and charming originality, and most of all his sound judgment and wonderful common sense, are put to the uses that help his fellow men, not only of his own city and colony, but of the world. His thriftiness brings financial success; his happy marriage brings tranquility of life and correctness of living.

He becomes influential and public-spirited, and what Benjamin Franklin undertakes is pretty sure to be successful.

Franklin is very remarkable for the number of schemes for social and public improvement which he began when they would be of vast influence on the undeveloped colonies. It would be hard to parallel his case in history. The experience he gained thus was of great value to himself, also, for he learned in such matters to put himself in the background. He says:

"I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a number of friends, who had requested me to go about and propose it."

This method brought success and is important because it was the one he uniformly followed in after life. His first enterprise of this character was the establishment of a library. He induced the members of the Junto to bring their few books to their club room for the common benefit, members being allowed to borrow books to read at home. This proved of service and led him to think of affording the benefit of reading to the public by means of a public subscription library. With difficulty he got fifty persons to subscribe forty shillings each and ten shillings a year. The books were imported and the library was open one day in the week to subscribers for borrowing on their promissory notes to pay double the value, if the book was not duly returned. This method was soon imitated by other towns and provinces and led to consequences of great moment.

"They made," he tells us, "the common tradesman

and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defense of their privileges." The library was founded in 1731 and incorporated in 1742.

He now began to acquire some wealth through his own industry and frugality and that of his wife who cheerfully folded and stitched pamphlets, tended shop and purchased old linen rags. He considered himself lucky in having such a wife and quoted the old English proverb:

"He that would thrive, must first ask his wife."

They lived very plainly, his breakfast being bread and milk with no tea, eaten out of a "two-penny earthen porringer with a pewter spoon."

He seemed to recover somewhat from his very strong tendency toward free-thinking and this new inclination grew stronger as the years went by. His experience with himself and others had convinced him that there was something wrong with his early views. He even wrote a pamphlet in refutation of his London screed.

The preaching of the day, which he always helped to support with his money, lacking the inculcating or enforcing of moral principles, he formed in 1728 a Liturgy for his own private use and went no more to public worship. But he strongly advised his daughter Sarah to never give up Divine Worship.

He now conceived the project of arriving at moral perfection. This illustrates well Franklin's moral attitude. He found the task, however, more difficult than he had

imagined. Among the virtues in which he meant to attain perfection were Temperance, Order, Frugality, Sincerity, Justice; and, on being told by a candid Quaker friend that he was proud and too confident in his own opinion, and being convinced of the truth of the assertion, he added to the list Humility. He naively says that he had a good deal of success with regard to the appearance of humility.

In 1732, he first published his "Almanac" under the name of Richard Saunders, and it was continued by him as Poor Richard's Almanac for twenty-five years. It was the comic almanac of the time and proved a great success, circulating to the extent of ten thousand copies per year.

It had enormous influence so that, as one of his biographers tells us, "'Poor Richard' became a *nom de plume* as renowned as any in English literature." It was one of the most influential publications in the world, being reprinted in Great Britain, and translated into French and distributed among the poor. Franklin thought that by discouraging useless expense it helped toward the growing plenty of money in Pennsylvania.

In 1733 he began the study of languages, and soon had some mastery of French. He then acquired a reading knowledge of Italian, Spanish and Latin, and strongly advocated this order in learning languages.

He loved the game of chess, and he persuaded the friend with whom he played to agree that the one who was beaten should learn the parts of some Italian verb, or do a portion of Italian into English before the next



The University of Pennsylvania, the outgrowth of the Academy established
by Franklin.

game. Thus, Parton says, "they beat one another into the acquisition of the Italian language."

We find him all through his life seeking diversion through music, also, which taste he inherited from his father; and he is said to have played on the harp, violin, violincello and guitar.

His political promotion began with his being elected Clerk of the General Assembly in 1736, and was followed the next year by his being appointed by Colonel Spottiswood, the postmaster-general, his deputy in Philadelphia. Franklin found this of great advantage, for it increased the circulation of his newspaper and the income from its advertisements.

He started the agitation which led to a regular police system instead of the old city watch, and December 7th, 1736, formed the Union Fire Company, the first of its kind in America.

When Whitefield visited the colonies in 1739, he found Franklin one of his earnest supporters. He tells in his inimitable autobiography a story of how he was carried away by Whitefield's eloquence and emptied his pockets, copper, silver and gold, into the collection box when he had made up his mind to give nothing.

A little before this he invented the Franklin stove or Pennsylvania fireplace which was the beginning of the American stove system. Franklin refused to take out a patent on it for worthy reasons which had no effect on a thrifty iron-monger of London who made some disadvantageous changes and at once secured a patent.

In 1743 he proposed to establish an academy but

failed; but the next year succeeded in founding the American Philosophical Society. These various projects were either established through the Junto or received valuable aid from that unique organization.

A few years later he again took up the matter of an Academy and the result was in time the University of Pennsylvania.

His mind was continually running on scientific matters. He loved to observe nature. He was a careful observer of ants and made interesting discoveries about them and, in 1743, he made the discovery that the north-east storms move backward, that is from southwest to northeast.

As the war between Spain and England came on in 1739, he took up the matter of the unprotected frontier of Pennsylvania and wrote a pamphlet entitled "Plain Truth," setting out in strong colors the defenceless condition of the colony and the necessity of union. This pamphlet was the means of a voluntary association for defence.

Franklin and others were sent to Governor Clinton of New York for cannon. Clinton at first absolutely refused to lend any, but at night when his council met and they had drunk a few glasses of Madeira wine, the Governor promised six; after a few more glasses ten, and when further intoxicated, he advanced the number to eighteen. Franklin took his turn as a common soldier in the battery. This visit to New York gave him some acquaintance with men of prominence.

Franklin proposed a lottery to defray the expenses of



George Clinton. Colonial Governor of New York.

building the battery. He now discovered that in defensive warfare the Quakers would offer no obstacle, for when New England solicited a grant of powder from Pennsylvania, the Quakers voted £3,000 for the purchase of bread, flour wheat, or other "grain," which latter meant gunpowder.

Franklin in 1748, took into partnership David Hall who had been a fellow workman in London, in order that he might have more leisure. He then turned his attention toward scientific investigations, especially in electricity.

But the people needed his services and he had to serve as justice of the peace, in the Common Council, and as their representative in the Assembly, which latter position pleased him especially. He was also elected by the House as one of the Commissioners for treating with the Indians at Carlisle. The Commissioners with difficulty persuaded the Indians to keep sober during the time of the treaty by promising plenty of rum afterward, which promise was kept.

In 1751, he assisted Dr. Bond, whose skillful flattery won him over, to found a hospital in Philadelphia. He got a conditional grant from the Assembly of \$10,000 for the purpose.

He also interested himself in schemes for street cleaning, paving and lighting, which afterward became organized efforts. He improved on the London lamps by making them of four flat panes with openings for air below, which the smoky London lamps did not have.

Tradition tells us also the story of the introduction of

plaster as a fertilizer; how Franklin in a field by the high-road wrote in large letters with plaster:— “This Has Been Plastered;” and how the brilliant green of the increased growth made the words very plain to the astonished farmers.

Having acted for some years as comptroller under the postmaster-general of America, he was, upon the death of that officer, appointed conjointly with Mr. William Hunter to succeed him. This was in the year 1753 and marks the time when Franklin began to have a part in the more important matters of the colonies as a whole. The American office had never paid the British government any revenue, but before Franklin got through with its management it paid three times as much net revenue as the Ireland office. After he was displaced “by a freak of the minister” it again ceased to pay. His connection with the post office was a matter of importance.

He was now a rising man in colonial affairs. It led to his travelling in New England and gave him an acquaintance there which had some bearing on after events. Harvard then conferred upon him the degree of Master of Arts. Yale had already done so, the honor in both cases being in recognition of his discoveries in electricity.

As the French and Indian war came on, the Lords of Trade (1753) directed the governors of various provinces to have commissioners sent by the assemblies to treat with the Six Nations and to form a union for general defence. The place of meeting was to be Albany on account of its convenience and nearness to the Six Nations.

Franklin was appointed one of the commissioners for Pennsylvania and the Congress met in June, 1754. On the way to Albany Franklin drew up a plan of union which he says in his autobiography was for all the colonies. This plan, which was his so-called "Short Hints," he showed to his friends in New York, in whose judgment he had confidence, *i. e.*, James Alexander and Cadwallader Colden. The "Short Hints," however, referred at first, at least, to a union of northern colonies only.

Alexander and Colden offered some criticisms and suggestions which Franklin made some slight use of.

At the Convention several plans of union were proposed but the Committee appointed to draw up plans, of which Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts and Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania were members, chose Franklin's and reported it with some modifications and it was adopted. There were twenty-five delegates from only seven states; all of which, except Maryland, were northern states. When the plan of union was submitted to the colonies their assemblies rejected it without exception because it gave the Crown too much power.

When submitted to the Lords of Trade and Plantations it was rejected because it gave too much power to the colonies. It was, however, a very important step in the evolution of a national idea and Franklin had his full share in it. The real reason why England rejected the plan of union was not that it gave the colonies too much specific power, but because it formulated a tendency toward organic union that the home government was alarmed at, although its order had led to it.

Franklin thought afterward that the adoption of his scheme might have made the assistance of the English troops in the French and Indian war unnecessary, prevented the attempts to tax the colonies for the expense of the war, and so prevented the Revolution. But that was mere fancy.

In the winter of 1754-5 he had some conversation with Governor Shirley of Massachusetts over the relations of the colonies to the mother country. Shirley seemed to favor a scheme, to take the place of the one rejected, by which the governors of the provinces and their councils should meet and order the raising of troops, etc., and draw on the imperial treasury for funds which should be returned by a tax levied by Parliament on the colonies.

Franklin took alarm at once and wrote three letters in December, 1754, setting out the principle of no taxation without representation. These letters were afterward published in the London "Chronicle" in December, 1766. Franklin thus laid out before hand the plan of campaign according to which the Revolution was fought. He, however, injudiciously admitted the right of Parliament to lay what he called secondary taxes through the operation of the Navigation Acts. Shirley proposed that the colonies be represented in Parliament, but Franklin thought that hardly practicable.

He was swept into the vortex of the war and gained experience of value in the coming struggles for independence. The inevitable struggle between England and France for the ownership of North America had begun. The contest seemed very unequal when we consider that

there were over a million whites in the British Provinces and only 80,000 French in Canada.

The outcome of the contest therefore could not be in doubt, though the concentrated administration of Canada and the incompetency of the English put off the inevitable.

Braddock's campaign and defeat cost Franklin dear because he was induced to persuade his fellow citizens of Pennsylvania to let out their horses and wagons to haul supplies and baggage for the army. They first insisted on his giving them a bond for the value of their property, which he did. The loss through Braddock's defeat was about \$100,000, which Franklin was bound to pay. Suits were instituted and he was only saved from ruin by Shirley, who appointed a commission to audit and pay the claims. Part of the money which he had advanced he never received. Against his own judgment he was, during the war, appointed Colonel of a regiment and sent with a small force to build forts on the frontier. He did his work well.

About this time he conceived the idea of extending the colonies inland over the mountains, thinking that in a century the Ohio Valley might become a populous and powerful domain; and such it has become even beyond his wildest dreams.

Ever since 1746 Franklin had been engaged in electrical experiments which culminated in his celebrated proof of the identity of lightning with the electric spark. The story is one of the most famous in history.

Standing under an old cow-shed after they had raised



Braddock's Retreat.

their kite in the rain, Franklin and his son had the satisfaction of drawing from the key at the end of the hempen kite-string unmistakable sparks. They then filled a Leyden jar which they had carried with them, and the next ship to Europe took the news of the discovery.

Having been provided by Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, (whom he had known in England), with a glass tube for use in his experiment, he soon had his house continually full of "people who came to see these new wonders."

He wrote several lectures and set up an ingenious neighbor as lecturer with machines made after Franklin's models and sent him through the colonies and even down to the West Indies. He then wrote Collinson several letters about his experiments, and sent the paper he had written for his neighbor on the sameness of lightning with electricity to Dr. Mitchell, one of the Royal Society. The Royal Society, however, poked fun at Franklin's papers. They fell afterward into the hands of Dr. Fothergill who saw their worth and had them printed and wrote a preface for the publication. A copy of this came into the hands of Count de Buffon, was translated into French and began to attract very general attention. It was afterward translated into Italian, German and Latin, and Franklin had full revenge upon the pedants who derided him. He was chosen a member of the Royal Society and presented with the medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753.

Franklin incurred the enmity of the proprietaries of Pennsylvania by his conduct in the Assembly. He was

the leader in the legislature and opposed very warmly the exemption of the estate of the proprietaries from taxation. He even denounced their motives as mean and unjust in demanding exemption.

The full force of their displeasure, fell of course, upon the leader, and we have in a sense a beginning of the struggle that was to issue in a contest, not between a proprietary and his colony, but between a King and his subjects. The proprietaries accused Franklin in turn with an intention of assuming the government of Pennsylvania by force. They even tried to get him removed from his office as post-master general for America but without success.



Gold Medal presented to Franklin by the Royal Society of London.

The Assembly meantime, were in a chronic state of wrangling with the governor, who was torn with conflicting desires to please the King, the proprietaries and the Assembly. Franklin and the governor seem, however, to have kept, personally, on good terms. The struggle between the Assembly and the proprietaries soon came to a head. The proprietaries insisted on a course of action which the Assembly construed as inconsistent with the privileges of the people and the service of the crown. The Assembly therefore determined to send a petition to the crown in their behalf and to send Franklin as their

agent in support of the petition. After a long delay occasioned by Lord Loudon's indecision, which Franklin graphically and humorously describes, he succeeded in getting off, although his baggage had all gone on before. It was on this occasion that Loudon was characterized by one of Franklin's friends as "like St. George on the signs, *always on horseback, but never rides on.*"

Franklin was waiting on Loudon partly to recover the balance due him for provisions furnished Braddock's army. Although Loudon's paymaster found the accounts entirely accurate, Loudon himself refused to pay, coarsely intimating that Franklin, like other contractors, had found a means of recompense by stealing from the public treasury. But after the fiasco at Louisburg, Loudon was recalled, too absurdly incompetent to be of use in the New World.

Franklin was, among other things, attempting to induce the Crown to resume the Province of Pennsylvania as his own. But there seemed to be no good prospect of the success of this mission; for about the time that Franklin was appointed, the House of Commons passed a resolution that the claim of the colonial Assemblies of the right to raise and disburse public money on their own authority was derogatory to the crown and the rights of the English people.

Franklin was accompanied by his son as secretary. They were chased by the French several times, but escaped. On his way to London from Falmouth he stopped at Stonehenge and arrived in the British capital

July 27th, 1757. He soon had an interview with Lord Granville, president of the council, and was alarmed at the position then taken by that statesman. Franklin was told in substance that the king's instructions to his governors were the "*law of the land*, for the king is the legislator of the colonies." Somewhat aghast, he answered that that was new doctrine to him. No wonder he was alarmed.

Franklin did not get on well with the proprietaries. Each side justified its own acts, and there seemed to be little hope of agreement. In fact Franklin had undertaken a negotiation with the proprietaries only on the advice of Dr. Fothergill, mentioned before. He was now told to negotiate with the solicitor of the proprietaries, Ferdinand John Paris, who had conducted their disputes with the Assembly. But he already had a mortal enmity to Franklin because the latter had, when answering the papers and messages sent to the Assembly, handled him without gloves. For Franklin knew how to wield a sharp pen on occasion.

Paris was such "a proud, angry man," that Franklin refused to have anything to do with him. The business was then turned over to the Attorney and Solicitor-General.

The matter dragged on for more than a year during which time Paris got even with his enemy by sending for the proprietaries a message to the Assembly complaining of Franklin's rudeness, and professing willingness to accommodate matters if "some person of candour" was sent to treat with them. But the Assembly

got back at them by passing an act taxing the proprietary estate in common with others and omitting to answer the message at all.

This whole matter has an extremely humorous flavor. In those times they did not preserve the amenities of life, nor were our ancestors backward in giving as good



David Hume.

as was sent. When this Act reached England for ratification by the king, there was a great effort made to defeat it. But as it involved a vital point of the right of the Assembly to tax the proprietary estate, Franklin fought hard to get it ratified. The matter of \$500,000 of paper money was involved in this dispute also, and the legality of the issu-

ing of bills of credit. By making some concessions, the act was ratified and the Assembly won.

Franklin had been kept in this business three years or more, for he had found himself very much hampered because he was merely the agent of the colonists and so a person of no importance.

He vainly tried to get an interview with William Pitt. Yet in other ways he found friends. His scientific dis-

coveries had made him a reputation and he was welcomed into the literary circle of such men as Lord Kames and David Hume.

He traveled extensively, going even to the Low Countries; was made Doctor of Laws by the Universities of St. Andrews and Oxford. This all led to a strong affection for England as time went by. One of his friends, Mr. Strahan, tried hard to get him to make England his permanent home, and offered his son in marriage with Franklin's daughter. But Mrs. Franklin did not look kindly on an ocean voyage.

Just at this time Franklin himself was trying to induce his son William to marry an English girl, Mary Stevenson, whom he had taken a strong fancy to. He also failed, and so no family bonds united him to the mother country.

It would have been a hard blow to the colonies if all these efforts had succeeded in making Franklin a naturalized Englishman.

The fall of Quebec in 1759 had practically ended the French and Indian war. Now arose a question of vital importance to the colonies. England, though the conqueror, desired peace, and the question was whether to retain Guadeloupe or Canada, both of which had been conquered.

The discussion of this question showed with what penetration some foresaw the coming splitting off of the colonies from the mother country. Many opposed the retention of Canada, because Canada in the hands of the French would always keep the British colonies depen-

dent upon England. Some went so far as to say that even if England could get Canada without any sacrifice at all she should not desire it.

Franklin had some important part in this discussion and with searching directness showed that the French occupation of Canada was a menace to the English possessions, and that to leave them there as a check upon the colonies only gave license to Indian barbarities.

In regard to the probable union of the colonies, he was not wholly ingenuous. That was what England feared, and Franklin labored to show that such union was impossible except under the most grievous tyranny and oppression.

Attorney-General Pratt did not believe in Franklin's boast of colonial loyalty and thought that an attempt at their independence was sure to come. Choiseul, the French Minister, and Vergennes thought the same.

Franklin returned home late in 1762. The Assembly voted him \$15,000 for his expenses, although he had spent much more. His friends filled his house in succession for many days, coming to congratulate him on his return.

The English government tried its hand at diplomacy, also, and in the Autumn of 1762 appointed his son William governor of New Jersey. Lord Bute seems to have brought this about. There was considerable intimacy between him and Franklin, for Bute was a man fond of books and an experimenter in science. Franklin took no part in securing the position — a valuable one — for his son. This appointment resulted in William becoming a

royalist and afterward a Tory refugee and led to an alienation between father and son that was only partially healed.

Franklin was now fifty-six years old. He, however, threw himself into business both public and private, and in 1763 traveled 1600 miles looking after the postal business of the colonies.

He was still a member of the Assembly and soon got into trouble with the governor, John Penn, who far from measured up to the character of the founder of the Province. Franklin had helped Penn in a marked way during the excitement over the Paxton massacre in which excitement Penn had acted an ignoble part, but on this very account Penn disliked Franklin the more.

The new governor, from whom much was expected because of his fair words, soon began the old quarrel with the Assembly. The ancient trouble over the tax levy on the proprietary's land came up anew. Franklin took a prominent part in the hot discussions and the people thought of again asking the Crown to assume the government of the colony.

During a recess of the Assembly he wrote a pamphlet entitled "Cool Thoughts on the Present Situation of our Public Affairs." He discussed the matter ably and impartially and was keen enough to see that neither the proprietary nor the people were different from others of their class, and that the trouble resided in the very nature of proprietary government and would last as long as it lasted.

He advised an immediate Royal Government. He

drew up a petition to the King in Council showing the difficulties and dangers in a proprietary governor, and praying his Majesty to resume the government of the Province.

The Speaker of the Assembly not having the courage to take so important a step even after the measure was carried resigned, and Franklin was chosen in his stead and affixed the official signature to the petition.

These disturbances led to deep animosity on Franklin's part toward the Penns and to bitter hatred of Franklin on the side of the proprietary party in Pennsylvania. So strong did Franklin's enemies become that they defeated him for the Assembly in 1764. But the new Assembly promptly took into consideration his appointment as Agent to the King in Council in support of the petition for the Crown to assume the government. This was a bitter pill to Franklin's enemies. They tried to defeat the measure and failing in this, passionately urged him to refuse the honor. He, however, accepted.

Franklin was ready to return to England within two weeks after his election. Because of lack of money in the treasury of the colony, some well-to-do citizens had to make up a private fund, part of which Franklin took.

His enemies made much of his being escorted to his ship by mounted citizens whose kindly service he was not informed of, and which he could not refuse.

He reached the Isle of Wight December 9th, 1764, and went at once to London to his old lodgings at No. 7 Craven Street, Strand. His lodgings were with Mrs. Stevenson whose daughter Mary he wished for his son

William. His affectionate letters to his wife show that he thought his stay would be only ten or twelve months, but it was ten years before he returned again to America.

The great oncoming struggle was throwing its shadow before. While Franklin was sent as the agent of but one colony on a matter of trivial importance, his field of operation was of necessity widened by the inevitable course of events until he became the representative of a whole people in regard to the most vital issues that could absorb the attention of a continent.

The matters in his hands grew more and more complex, and caused him more and more anxiety, and drew him on further and further, until in the English eye he stood as the personification of rebellion.

It will be remembered that more than one statesman, English or French, had foreseen the destiny of the colonies, and that the plan of union of 1754 had been rejected by the Lords of Trade because it would produce an organized, consolidated power in the colonies. But, although the theory of union had failed of recognition, the fact of union was evident. The war had done that. It "had moved the colonies into a perilous foreground."

Another thing; the war had shown the colonies their own strength as a military power.

Still again, it had made clear their immense financial resources; and these took on enormous proportions when the development of the future was considered. All of these things except the last had been dimly apparent to Great Britain. The financial resources of the colonies came as a positive revelation to the British government.

What this meant, what use could be made of it, became at once entirely clear to a government compelled to increase its taxation on an already over-burdened people.

The government over-estimated the advantages of the war to the colonies in contradistinction to the benefit to Great Britain, and under-estimated the share of the burden that the colonies had borne in the war. The ministry claimed that the war was undertaken in defence of the colonies, when in fact it was to stop encroachments upon territory of the British Empire. It was claimed further that the war was undertaken because the colonies could not defend themselves against the French and Indians, when they not only could do so but had done so.

But it was at bottom a dispute that was sure to arise between a colony and the mother country under the existing colonial system.

The Stamp Act of 1765 was no change in policy in any sense; it was all contained in the navigation and colonial system of England after 1651.

This is well shown by the fact that when the ministry tried to relieve the overtaxed people of England by throwing part of the charges of the war on the colonies by direct act of Parliament, it began by revising the Navigation Act. In general, ever since 1651 the Navigation Act had either not been enforced at all or had been evaded by smuggling. It was now intended to enforce it by reducing the duties which had before been so high as to be uncollectible, and thus obtain revenue. All economists of the time seemed to agree upon the wisdom and justice of the navigation acts. Even

Adam Smith later could not entirely divorce himself from old traditions. Nor could the ministry say that money for the king's service had not readily been obtained. Upon requisition from the Secretary of State the assemblies had uniformly appropriated money up to the limit of their ability. In the late war they had lost 30,000 men in the field and spent \$15,000,000.

The new efforts to tax America began in 1763, when George Grenville took up Townshend's plan already referred to. The colonists had one weak point. They had always professed willingness to submit to any indirect taxation such as was laid for the ostensible benefit of English trade. So Grenville started in to regulate trade along this line.

His method was to the effect that first, the colonies could purchase goods in England alone; second, that colonies should not manufacture any articles which they could purchase from England; third, that they could not trade with one another in articles which would in any way directly or indirectly interfere with English trade. To this, in 1764, it was intended to add an act which would be in the nature of direct taxation. This was the Stamp Act. Grenville gave notice of his intention to introduce it later.

Very few in England seemed to think that this would meet with any determined opposition. Franklin, however, before he set out for England in 1764, heard of the coming step and opposed it in the Assembly. He carried with him the protest of the people of Pennsylvania. He visited Grenville and protested against the Act, but

to no purpose. It became a law March 22d, 1765.

It seems at first glance strange that Franklin, after the Act became a law, apparently looked upon it as something that the colonies would have to submit to as best they might.

In one of his letters he speaks, not of opposition, but of frugality and industry by which to indemnify the people for their loss through the Stamp Act.

He was much discouraged and despondent although his mind did not lose its philosophical way of looking at things. He looked upon forcible resistance as not only entirely unlikely but impossible. It was only in the dim future, when the colonies had greatly increased in numbers, that he saw any chance of secession. In fact it was much easier to think and talk resistance three thousand miles away, than it was in England itself where the seemingly overwhelming power of Great Britain was everywhere manifest.

But Grenville intended, as he told Franklin, to make the execution of the Act as little inconvenient as possible, and so arranged to have for stamp distributors American born and not Englishmen. Strangely enough he succeeded in getting Franklin to nominate a man in Philadelphia.

This mistake almost ruined Franklin who did not at all understand the temper of the colonists, and is to be explained on the ground that he, over-awed by the manifest power of the mother country, looked upon any thing else but submission as madness. He was denounced in Pennsylvania as a traitor. All sorts of ru-

mors were set afloat. He was said to have actually planned the Stamp Act, and in some of the coarse cuts of the time the devil was represented as making "Ben" his agent throughout his dominions. This all hurt him very keenly. He was taken by surprise because he was totally unconscious of wrong. The bitter, frenzied denunciation of him, the threatened mob violence upon his house and his wife and daughter, fairly took his breath away. Truly he had raised a tempest of great proportions.

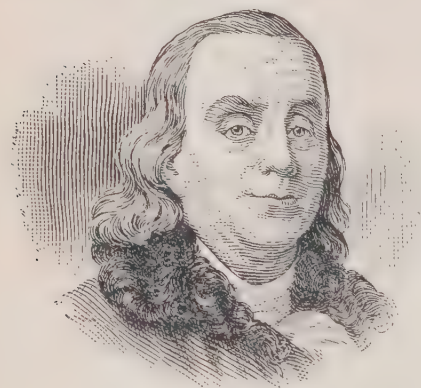
In this connection we must remember the growing affection which he had conceived for the mother country. That was of influence on his mind. But his patriotism was as pure and undying as any man's, and the news from America at once woke him to the true state of affairs and he hastened to take his stand squarely and firmly with his countrymen.

It is interesting to notice this only occasion when Franklin failed to accurately judge and reflect the opinions and wishes of the colonies.

The act had become a feature in English politics and the foes of the government now attacked the measure although the belief in it had been well nigh universal. But Grenville had things well in hand. He was growing daily stronger in Parliament and the cause of the colonies seemed lost. But all of a sudden the erratic and half insane George III drove out of office the man who was best qualified and most likely to bring about the very results desired by the Crown.

Pitt tried to form a ministry but failed, and the Duke of Cumberland who succeeded could get together only a

weak and odd patchwork of a cabinet. But in other directions a strong agency was working against the Stamp Act. The Americans had formed their non-importation agreements. They imported no more English cloth or other goods. They killed no sheep for food but raised wool for homespun cloth. English manufacturers lost a profitable market and began to go into bankruptcy.



Franklin in 1766.

Commerce and shipping were affected; all branches of business suffered.

John Milton truly said in one of his prose productions, that when you touch an Englishman in his pocket you touch his very life. So it was here. The

Stamp Act now touched the Englishman personally, in his home, and although he cared nothing for the colonists, yet he became an enemy of the Stamp Act and the ministry.

To add to the discomfiture of the government, the Duke of Cumberland died. In January, 1766, Pitt took up the cudgel for the colonies and denied Grenville's assertion that taxation is a part of that sovereign power which England had over America. He also denounced

the fiction that the colonies were virtually represented in Parliament, as of the Manor of East Greenwich, as "the most contemptible that ever entered into the head of man." Thus the movement began for the repeal of the Act. Parliament, however, took its stand on its rights first and passed a resolution that the King in Parliament had full power to bind the colonies in all cases. This was a sop to the King to get him to sign the repeal.

While Parliament was considering the repeal, Franklin was called as a witness before the bar of the House of Commons in committee of the whole. This examination "perhaps displayed his ability to better advantage than any other single act in his life." His statements were pithy, searching, courageous, moderate, able and in good temper.

He made it clear that the colonies would never submit to the Stamp Act or any other like act, and that if required they would produce their own necessities. He referred to himself later as willing to retire to the forests of America and support himself by the labor of the chase rather than submit to wrong.

During this examination he brought out very clearly that the colonies had their own parliaments, *i. e.*, their assemblies, and that the King was their sovereign as he was of the people and Parliament of England.

"We are," he said, "free subjects of the King; and fellow subjects of one part of his dominions are not sovereigns over fellow subjects in any other part."

Another thing that he brought out; that he was especially instructed to say that the assemblies would be

glad to vote for the King's service all they could afford when called upon in the constitutional fashion. He was very careful, too, to show how the feeling in America had changed since 1763. His answers astonished England and thrilled America.

Yet, strange to say, Franklin had a personal regard for King George, and a remarkable and unfounded faith in his purposes toward America. He kept trying to influence America in favor of the King while denouncing Parliament. His old affection for England led him to look kindly upon the British people. It was Parliament that he denounced. It was Parliament that was upsetting the British Empire. This was an illogical position, but one easily explained from Franklin's previous history.

He soon saw his mistake, and that King George III was behind the movement to subject the colonies, and his former liking turned to deep personal hatred. Friends of the colonies and Parliament tried to avoid serious trouble by advocating representation of the colonies in Parliament. Franklin, of course, did not oppose such a movement which in theory was all right, but he was shrewd enough to see that it would never work in practice. For the colonies which had very much desired this once were indifferent now, and soon would take the stand of absolutely declining any such union. Yet as advantageous as it would be to England, that nation was too proud to seek union with the despised colonies.

He also brought out clearly his ideas as to internal and external taxation and how the first could not be evaded

and was unjust if forced upon a people by others than their own representatives. He felt himself bound to say that a duty on the importation of goods was just because it went to maintain a fleet and protect commerce.

He showed also how willing the colonies were to bear their share of public burdens and how it would take twenty years to recover from the burden of debt on account of the old French war.

He pointed to their actions during the late war as conclusive proof. Not only that, but he stated that in the case of an European war, the colonies would help England to the best of their ability.

Early in 1766 Parliament, under heavy pressure, passed the repeal of the Stamp Act and on March 18th the King was induced to sign it.

It was a day of rejoicing not only to English merchants and manufacturers but to all the colonies as well. They seemed to forget that Parliament had not given up the right to lay such taxes, but had passed with the repeal an act declaring in vigorous terms such authority.

Franklin of course was now a great man in the eyes of the people of Philadelphia who thought the repeal was due to his efforts. They forgot their wrath which so lately burned against their agent for his early mistake as to their temper toward the Stamp Act.

In all his earnest endeavors to protect the colonies, he could not help perpetrating his jokes at the expense of the impenetrable British egotism and ignorance of America.

Many absurd stories were afloat as to America which

were easily swallowed by the Britons. One was that American sheep had almost no wool. He answered this by the statement that the very tails of the American sheep were so laden with wool that they had to have a little wagon on four wheels to support it. Such extravagances they received with open-mouthed amazement.

He turned the tables on them by writing, secretly, an article for the newspapers to the effect that the King of Prussia claimed England as his province, and asserted the right of taxation there, using the same arguments as the English used in regard to the colonies.

Yet he could arouse no interest in American affairs. People were densely ignorant and wished to remain so. Nothing could arouse them to learn the facts about the colonies. In France it was very different. France, through her consulate, kept up communication with Franklin. His papers were translated into French, and all information in regard to America was eagerly sought.

Franklin had long desired to return home, and was preparing to do so when news came of his appointment by Georgia and New Jersey as their colonial agent. He seems to have owed his appointment by Georgia to Whitefield, who still had great influence there, and whose warm regard for Franklin never ceased.

On the other hand, he was appointed to the same office by Massachusetts only after a bitter fight on him by Samuel Adams, who did not seem to appreciate Franklin.

Arthur Lee, of Virginia, the candidate of Adams, was elected substitute in case of Franklin's absence from

London. Meanwhile the reaction after the repeal was in full force, and the English newspapers were full of attacks on the colonies, especially after their vigorous protest against the new taxes on tea, paint, etc., which England thought so innocent.

All these things combined to keep Franklin in England for nearly ten years. He still held his position as postmaster-general in the colonies, though he felt his tenure of office to be by sufferance.

His enemies made use of his continuance in office for the basis of slanderous rumors that he was being thus bribed by the British government; that he was to be made secretary in return for his changing his views on colonial questions. In fact, he was often approached through offers of office. But these rumors were partly, at any rate, the work of a



Statue of Franklin, in front of City Hall, Boston.

traitorous egotist—Arthur Lee. It must be borne in mind that the repeal of the Stamp Act was not through any liking for the colonies, nor because the Parliament or the people as a whole desired it. It was the disturbance of commerce that did it.

England merely admitted that she had erred in the method of asserting her rights, but not in regard to the rights themselves. It was a humiliating thing, indeed, that the greatest nation in Europe should be obliged to back down in its first attempt to deal with its colonies in the matter of taxation. The only saving thing about it was the declaration that Parliament could tax if it wanted to.

France, we may be sure, enjoyed the episode hugely, and looked forward with delight to the time when the colonies should break away entirely. It would be a sweet revenge, in one sense, for the loss of Canada.

The colonies, like a parcel of children, as soon as the Act was repealed, seemed to consider the whole incident closed for good. Various colonies voted statues for the King and Pitt, and portraits of Camden, Barré and Conway. In their minds England would never again endanger by her acts the good will of the colonies toward the mother country.

Franklin set himself to calming the colonies on the one hand and educating the English on the other, so that he soon found himself suspected by both—by the colonies as too much of an Englishman; by England as too much of an American.

The Rockingham ministry was too weak to stand the

shock of the repeal, and went to pieces. Pitt formed a new one with Shelburne, Camden and Conway, all of whom were favorable to America. But he was obliged to take in Townshend as chancellor of the exchequer. Townshend was the arch-enemy of the colonies, the originator of the offensive scheme of colonial taxation, the reckless scoffer at colonial rights, "the incurable," as Pitt called him.

While Shelburne had charge of the administration of colonial affairs, and acted in a perfectly just and satisfactory manner in all things coming within his functions, Townshend had the management of taxation. He had the initiative, while Shelburne administered. Not only that, he had the backing of King George III, who urged him on in his warfare against the colonies.

Unfortunately for America, Pitt had committed the mistake of ceasing to be a commoner and had become the Earl of Chatham, and while he rose in dignity he fell in power. He soon became a wreck, and shut himself up from all participation in public business. This left Townshend in full sway.

Taking advantage of the distinction drawn by Franklin, Pitt and the colonies, between a direct tax and commercial imposts, which latter were admitted to be right, Townshend brought forward a new scheme of taxation. It embodied the method of indirect taxation by means of imposts, and so satisfactory to the colonies was it supposed to be that it passed Parliament without opposition of consequence.

Townshend also tried to punish New York for not

obeying the act as to quartering British soldiers in the colony. This created bad blood. These acts showed clearly the determination of Parliament to raise revenue from America.

Townshend's bill had provided imposts on tea, paint, paper, glass and lead. It at once became apparent to John Dickinson of Pennsylvania that the stand of the colonies in favor of submitting to imposts was fraught with grave danger. He therefore wrote the "Letters of a Farmer," to urge the colonies to recede from their position, and to maintain that any tax of whatever kind for the purpose of raising a revenue was a violation of their rights as British subjects.

Under the pressure of these and similar papers and of the trend of events, the colonies advanced to this position which they maintained to the end of the Revolutionary war.

When Townshend's influence was most in the ascendant, he died September, 1767. He was succeeded by Lord North, who was in name the head of the ministry while the King himself was the real controller of the destinies of Britain.

Shelburne was also superceded by an Irish peer, the Earl of Hillsborough. At first Franklin was inclined to like the new secretary for the colonies, but he was soon undeceived.

The Earl tried to insist that Franklin had no regular commission as an agent because it was not a bill signed by the governor, but simply a vote of the Assembly. In this attempt to bluff Franklin he condescended to use

falsehood, but in this he was detected by Franklin, who, at the end of the stormy interview, left the Earl pale with anger by intimating that he would give his lordship no further trouble. He had no conception that an agent could, "*at present*, be of any use to any of the colonies." To this the doughty Irish peer took offense and continued to refuse to acknowledge Franklin as agent of Massachusetts.

This did not materially affect the latter's position or influence. Papers and arguments found their way through his hands to their proper place and were as effective as before. But Franklin had his revenge in seeing Hillsborough soon lose his position, because of his duplicity and of the growing dislike of the King which Franklin took care to augment.

The ministry, desiring to propitiate the colonies as far as possible asked Franklin to nominate a successor to Hillsborough who would be acceptable to America. He suggested the Earl of Dartmouth who was friendly to the colonies.

He got on well with Dartmouth, but the trouble was that both the colonies and Parliament had gone too far to recede. Each had taken its stand upon the principles it meant to abide by and the pleasant personal relations between Franklin and Dartmouth did not matter.

Then in 1772 and 1773 came up the wrangle between Hutchinson, governor of Massachusetts, and the Assembly over the same old question about colonial taxation.

That made matters still worse for it embarrassed the ministry and led the Assembly of Massachusetts to a res-

olution which was absolutely repugnant to the claimed powers of Parliament. Franklin and Dartmouth labored in vain to undo the mischief that the Stamp Act had begun.

Franklin longed for the restoration of the kindly feeling and the state of affairs before that awful blunder was made. But of course neither he nor Dartmouth could turn back the hand on the dial of time. The mischief had been done and nothing could now undo it. Yet he longed for peace and refused to believe that war would come.

He counselled moderation at home; that the mob might not get control; but that leaders of ability and patriotism might have direction of affairs. Especially he recommended the non-importation agreements which produced industry and frugality in the colonies and ruin to English merchants. They would act as a tariff now acts, but without the tremendous cost that a tariff makes necessary, and he seemed to be about to accomplish his purpose. It had cost vastly more to collect revenue by the Customs Act than the revenue was worth.

The East Indian Company lost enormously by the failure of the colonists to purchase tea, while at the same time Dutch, Danish, Swedish and French smugglers up and down the 1500 miles of sea coast furnished all the beverage which the thriving Yankee house-wives wanted.

Franklin, while in England, never ceased his private studies, and large social intercourse with educated Englishmen. With him lived his grandson, William Temple Franklin, son of the governor of New Jersey.

The lad was intelligent and comely and a great solace to his grandfather under whose eye he was trained. While the father in New Jersey was drifting toward the position of royalist, the son was imbibing the ideas of liberty. With him lived, also, Sally Franklin, a daughter of distant English relatives, whom he adopted and educated and saw happily married. While he was in England his favorite daughter, Sarah, was married to Mr. Bache whom Franklin had never seen. Their son was the Benjamin Franklin Bache so famous in the controversies of Jefferson's day.

Franklin longed for home as much as Mrs. Franklin fondly longed for him, but they were never to see each other again on earth. She reminded him of home, however, by sending Indian meal, cranberries, apples, hickory nuts and material for buckwheat cakes, which he sometimes divided with English friends.

He was still engaged in helping others. He assisted American hospitals; sent the books for a medical library; sent a telescope to Harvard College in 1769, and secured for his friend, Rev. Samuel Cooper, of Boston, the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Edinburgh University. His philosophical investigations at this time would fill a volume.

He discovered how breathing devitalizes the air; suggested a method to ventilate the House of Commons; showed that fresh air does not produce colds; discussed smoking chimnies, swimming, metallic roofs, spots on the sun, rainfall, fire proof stairs, the torpedo, Armonica, Northwest Passage, magnet, improved carri-

age wheels, glass blowing, Prince Rupert's drops, Aurora Borealis, inflammatory gases, the effect of vegetation upon air and water, the use of oil to calm the waves, the invention of a stove that should consume its own smoke. He discussed questions in political economy, and Adam Smith seems to have been indebted to him for some

parts of "The Wealth of Nations."



Gen. Horatio Gates.

Franklin had many friends in England; some of them have already been mentioned. He was well acquainted with Lord Shelburne, the Marquis of Rockingham, Lord Le Despense, Lord Bathurst and Lord North. He knew George II and George III, Mrs. Mon-

tague, Garrick, Benjamin West the American painter, Horatio Gates and General Charles Lee, Hawksworth, Stanley, Dr. Price, Dr. Priestley, Dr. Fothergill, Dr. Shipley, and Sir John Pringle.

He saw Handel conduct for the last time one of his own works. He knew intimately Adam Smith and Edmund Burke. He met Goldsmith and had known Col-
linson since his first visit to London when a youth.

Franklin found a true friend in Pringle who in 1772 was chosen President of the Royal Society, but was

forced by King George III to resign for a singular reason. The King had in his anger against Americans obstinately set his mind on having blunt knobs on the lightning rods of the Palace instead of sharp points. Franklin had directed sharp points for better protection. The matter became a court question. All concerned were obliged to line up for or against blunt knobs or sharp points, King George III or Franklin. Because Pringle sided with Franklin, the King intimated that a man who did not know any more than to favor sharp conductors was not fit for the position as President of the Royal Society.

An incident about this time added fuel to the flames. It was the matter of the Hutchinson letters. Franklin naturally resented the measures taken by the government to over-awe the colonies and showed his resentment. He was informed that the measures were those advised by Americans and ought to be satisfactory to America. This Franklin refused to believe until he was confronted with the very letters advising the sending of troops to Boston and other measures. They were written by Thomas Hutchinson governor of Massachusetts and by Lieutenant-Governor Oliver.

Franklin seemed to think that if leading men of Massachusetts could know that the action of the English government had been by instigation of men in their own colony in high position, it might mitigate the bad feeling on their part toward Great Britain and tend to a settlement of matters.

Whether Franklin was entirely sincere in this or not

may be a question, but his conscience seems to have been entirely devoid of offense. At any rate, on this understanding he obtained the letters on a pledge that they should be given into the hands of a select few only and should not be printed or copied. He agreed and sent the letters to Massachusetts strictly requiring his correspondents to observe the conditions set out.

In all this Dr. Franklin's judgment was at fault, for in this case, as is almost sure to happen, some one refused, in a matter of such great importance, to be bound. By a trick the documents found their way into the hands of the Assembly and were printed. Their publication produced a sensation. There were charges and counter-charges. Hutchinson and Oliver were furious; so was the Assembly and petitioned the King for the removal of the governor and his lieutenant. This petition was sent to Franklin and by him presented.

Meantime the friends of Hutchinson and Oliver, and the enemies of the colonies were trying to discover how these letters came into the hands of the Assembly, and over the dispute as to the matter two men fought a bloody duel.

Franklin, at the time, was absent from London and on his return heard of the affair and hastened to prevent a renewal of the duel by publishing a letter to the effect that he sent the documents to Massachusetts. This brought the wrath of the English government down on Franklin because by this time the matter had become of political importance. He was cited to appear before the Lords of the Committee for Plantation Affairs on the

matter of the petition, and was there grievously insulted. It was rumored that he was to be arrested and sent to Newgate and the result of the petition was decided beforehand. The Lords in their decision censured him and went out of their way to insult him.

This judicial censure put an end to his prestige and his ability to be of service as Agent of the colonies. He was looked upon in England as the fomenter of trouble and even Massachusetts found fault with him for alleged laxness. His liberty if not his life seemed to be in danger. He was threatened with prosecution for treason and yet he refused to leave England. He visited Lord Chatham and was well received and warmly defended by him in the House of Lords.

One of the last pieces of business he was engaged in was one in which he was secretly "approached" by persons connected with Lord Howe and Lord North. In the course of this the formal attempt was made to bribe Franklin but without success. In fact, these attempts had been very numerous. The political morals of England were then so low, and statesmen were so accustomed to bribing and being bribed that they could not conceive of any one rejecting such offers as were made to Franklin.

He still suffered from the venomous slanders of Arthur Lee. He, however, placed his agencies in Lee's hands and spent one last day with his tried friend, Dr. Priestley, who never deserted him.

Franklin experienced profound feeling in leaving England. It meant the impossibility to peaceably settle the

troubles between England and her colonies. To avoid arrest, he went to Portsmouth as secretly as possible and arrived in Philadelphia May 5, 1775. In the meantime his faithful wife, with whom he had lived so long, had passed away.

Americans of the present day scarcely ever appreciate the fact that Franklin performed his greatest services for his country when he was an old man; when he had passed beyond the age to which very few attain, an age when *those* that reach it are beginning to be feeble in body and torpid in mind.

When Franklin returned from England he was sixty-nine years old; older than Washington when he died.

When he landed, the battles of Lexington and Concord had already been fought. The colonies needed the services of every man, but especially of a man whose character and abilities were so transcendent. Therefore instead of coming home to spend his old age in peace and quiet, Franklin was called upon to perform services that were so harassing and difficult that they would have taxed the energies of a far younger man.

The breach between the colonies and the mother country, of course, brought a breach between him and his English friends. It would not do at this point to omit the very famous letter to Mr. Strahan, his friend for many years. It was dated July 5th, 1775:—

“Mr. Strahan:

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction. You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People—Look upon your hands!—They are stained with the Blood of your Relations!—You and I were long

Philad^a July 5. 1775-

W^r Strahan,

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— You have begun to burn our Towns,
and murder our People. — Look upon
your Hands! — They are stained with the
Blood of ^{your} Relations! — You and I were
long Friends: — You are now my En-
emy, — and

I am,

Yours,
B Franklin

Reduced Fac-Simile of Franklin's Famous Letter to Mr. Strahan.

Friends:—You are now my Enemy,—and I am, Yours,
B. Franklin."

This breach between old friends was, however, healed in after years and they became enemies no longer.

In quite a different strain he wrote to Dr. Priestley, for whom he had a deep affection, but his letters show profound feeling against England. He bade him tell his friends in England that they need have no doubts as to America's firmness.

"Britain" he said, "at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head;—during the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America."

He then bids them "calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory."

He had hardly landed in May before he was elected delegate to the Second Continental Congress. He was especially active on committees and was instrumental in organizing the army, navy and the finances of the new government.

He was especially instrumental in outlining the national policy of the government. His calm temperament and sound judgment made him just the person to harmonize conflicting interests. He equalized and unified action. He restrained the over zealous, and spurred on the slow footed.

To the contention that America was unfilial in her rebellion, he retorted that Britain had never accorded any advantage to Saxony, her mother country, but had

subsidized the King of Prussia to invade that mother country. In all this he had to have his joke, and Parton in his "Life of Franklin" conjectures that the reason why he was not called upon to write the Declaration of Independence was that he would have put a joke in it.

"His jokes, the circulating medium of Congress, were as helpful to the cause as Jay's conscience, or Adams fire;—but they were out of place in formal, exact, and authoritative papers."

Having once tried his hand on the plan of union of 1754, he drew up a plan of union for the colonies which he presented July 21, 1775, which is called the "First Sketch of a Plan of Confederation which is known to have been presented to Congress." It is of interest to notice that it provided for the admission to the confederation, on application, of Ireland, West Indies Islands, Canada, and Florida.

Not only did he have to serve in Congress, but he was put in charge of the postal service, and made chairman of the provincial committee of safety to organize Pennsylvania for war.

He tells Dr. Priestley in a letter that he began his daily work at six o'clock in the morning by attendance upon this committee.

He also "devised and constructed" marine *Chevaux de frise* to protect the Delaware river.

In October, 1775, he was elected a member of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, but as the oath of allegiance to the King was still required he refused to take it and resigned his place.

In September, as one of a committee for Congress, he had gone to Boston to confer with Washington and to view the condition of the war.

It took thirteen days to go on horseback from Phila-



Meeting of Washington and the Commissioners Franklin, Benjamin Harrison and Thomas Lynch, Cambridge, October, 1775.
From Holley's "Life of Franklin."

delphia to Boston. There he, of course, met the great leaders of the Revolution who looked upon him with the greatest admiration. As if all these services were not enough to put upon an old man of seventy years, Congress was selfish enough to send him to Canada to confer with Arnold about the attitude of Canada. It was early in the year and the ice still made progress in the lakes and rivers impossible. Upon reaching Saratoga he realized the task he had undertaken and sat down



Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, where the first Continental Congress met on September 5, 1774.

to say a last word to his friends whom he never expected to see again. Writing to Josiah Quincy he said:

"I begin to apprehend that I have undertaken a fatigue that at my time of life may prove too much for me;

so I sit down to write to a few friends by way of farewell."

He lived to reach Canada, but the state of his health compelled a quick return without accomplishing anything. Upon recommendation of Congress, the different states set about



Interior, Carpenter's Hall.

erecting new, independent governments, and of course Franklin was called upon for assistance and advice in regard to Pennsylvania's constitution. He was elected a member of the constitutional convention and presided over its meetings. The new constitution called for a legislature of one house, Pennsylvania being one of only

two states having but one house. Franklin seems to have always opposed bi-cameral legislatures.

Even in the spring of 1776, many leaders were opposed to permanent independence, but Franklin could see no probability of a return to the old order of things, and when Samuel Adams threatened to form a New England confederacy, Franklin offered to join it.

But he did not need to join a New England confederacy to declare his independence of England, for it was only a short time until he was on a committee appointed by Congress to draft a Declaration of Independence.



Franklin Signing the Declaration of Independence.

During the debate on the Declaration he amused Jefferson with stories, and when the immortal document was about to be signed, gave utterance to that grim joke which is world famous:

“Yes, we must indeed all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

When it came to establishing a working government

and to forming a constitution, Franklin had great influence. He made a draft of Articles of Confederation, which his experience in the convention of 1754 had fitted him to do.

When the struggle arose between the large and small states and their proportion of power, he was in favor of the larger states, for we must remember that Pennsylvania was then, as now, the second state in the union in population. He wanted the voting according to population, and did not regard the danger of the large states swallowing up the smaller as worthy of consideration.

In his humorous way he illustrated it by Scotland and England. He explained that it was said when Scotland was united to England that the whale had swallowed Jonah, but when Lord Bute came into power it was seen that Jonah had swallowed the whale.

Lord Howe was especially acceptable to Americans, and was for this reason sent to America in July, 1776, to affect a reconciliation. He communicated with Franklin whom he had known in England. Franklin answered by authority of Congress in a firm and rather aggressive letter giving Lord Howe the reasons why no reconciliation could be effected upon any other basis than independence.

Lord Howe took this aggressive letter in good part for he seems to have had a genuine liking for Franklin, and after the battle of Long Island tried again by paroling General Sullivan and sending him with a message to Congress proposing an accommodation. Franklin, John Adams and Edward Rutledge were sent to meet

him, but the conference amounted to nothing for his Lordship was told by all three that the colonies could not return to the domination of Great Britain. Such was the condition of affairs when Franklin was elected in September, 1776, envoy to France.

It is easy to see why Franklin was chosen for this important work. Besides his unrivalled judgment and tact, he was the only American who had had anything approaching diplomatic experience. Diplomats of that day and of a few rebellious colonies had naturally a very difficult position. Europeans were in no hurry to acknowledge the independence of rebellious peoples even though they desired to strike a blow at England. For monarchs to do that looked like encouraging attempts at liberty at home.

It was evident to all that the colonies could hope for the most from France of all the European nations. Her statesmen had foreseen this struggle for independence, and had expected that thus England would be repaid for the taking of Canada.

Silas Deane had already been sent to France, even before the colonies had declared themselves independent, and Arthur Lee, then in London, had been directed to ascertain the disposition of the European powers.

Morse, in his "Life of Franklin," says of Deane: "He was the true Yankee jack-at-all-trades; he had been graduated at Yale College, then taught school, then practiced law, then engaged in trade—had been elected to the first and second Congresses—and was now without employment."

He could not speak French, and had had no adequate training whatever, and soon got so involved that he was recalled practically in disgrace, having partly lost his reputation for financial honesty. He was, no doubt, hardly used and suffering unjustly, but being unwilling to await the vindication of history, he became, like Ar-



Count de Vergennes.

nold, embittered, lost his head, turned renegade to his country, and died in exile broken down and unreconciled.

Deane reached France in June, 1776, with some letters of introduction from Franklin. He had a little money, and was to be furnished more by sending to him cargoes of American products like rice, tobacco, etc.

His first business was to sound Vergennes, the French minister, as to what help the colonies could expect, and was further to ask for military supplies and equipment for 25,000 men, with 200 pieces of field artillery. Of course the colonies had no money with which to pay for the things needed, and so offered to pay in promises.

Deane found Vergennes on the whole favorable to the colonies, as were other members of the French Cabinet, and these overcame the scruples of Louis XVI, who seems not to have understood the significance of the movement he was about to assist.

While Deane was to conduct his mission in secrecy, as a merchant writing under the name of Timothy Jones,

and adding to his commercial letters dispatches in invisible ink, he had too much of the failing of the Connecticut Yankee to keep still. He indiscreetly told everything he knew to Dr. Edward Bancroft, an American whom Congress had hired as a spy. Bancroft was a traitor, and communicated his information to the British ministry.

Before Deane arrived in France, Beaumarchais, "one of the most extraordinary characters in history," had, while in England, imbibed the notion from Arthur Lee that the colonies were invincible, and had begun operations in France in their behalf. He was greatly in favor with the young King, and his enthusiasm infected even the King.

Vergennes sided with Beaumarchais, and declared that now was the time to reduce England to a second class power. He wanted the rebellion to last at least one year, so that the colonies would suffer so much as to thoroughly hate England. He favored keeping nominally a friendly attitude toward England while secretly assisting the Americans.

Turgot argued differently, and opposed this scheme and won the King to his side, but Vergennes was the coming man in France and controlled the policy of the realm. He and Beaumarchais thereupon concocted a remarkable scheme to secretly help the colonies.

The firm of Roderique Hortalez & Co. was established in Paris, and Beaumarchais was made manager. The capital, \$600,000 in all, was secretly furnished by the French and Spanish governments. Beaumarchais was

to act simply as a merchant "at his own risk and peril." He was to use his capital to purchase military supplies for the colonies, which, however, would be sold from the French arsenals. But he was obliged to pay for them, and when he sold them to the colonies he was to get his return in American products.

Deane arrived just then, heard what was doing, told it all to Bancroft, Bancroft to the British government, and British cruisers shut up the ships of Hortalez & Co. in French harbors.

The British government vehemently complained; Vergennes was obliged to issue strict instructions against unlawful trade and Beaumarchais, reduced with a vengeance to the level of a real merchant, had to get his goods out and in as best he could. He had no favoritism shown him by the government, and consequently it was a long time before he got any supplies to America. He, also, could not get American products in, and was near bankruptcy. But Franklin arrived late in 1776, and things began to look brighter.

Congress had in the early autumn decided to send a regular embassy to France, and elected Franklin, Jefferson and Deane (who was already there), to represent the colonies in France. Jefferson declined and Arthur Lee was substituted.

Franklin ran great risks in going to France, as he had to go in a sloop of war of only sixteen guns, which was several times chased by British frigates. Soon after landing he wrote to one who playfully called him a rebel, that she must wait the outcome to see whether



Franklin's Reception at the Court of France.

it was a rebellion or a revolution. His appearance in Paris caused a furore, and Lord Rockingham said that Franklin's presence more than offset the victory of the English at Long Island. They looked upon him as a sage, an ideal of republican simplicity, compared with immortal Greeks and Romans.

Strange, indeed, to the gay Parisians must have seemed his appearance with his spectacles and cap of fur, his brown Quaker clothes of colonial cut, his head devoid of a wig.

He seemed to enjoy a reputation, according to John Adams, greater than either Leibnitz, Newton, Frederick or Voltaire. In order not to embarrass the government, he established himself in the retired suburb of Passy. He lived plainly but comfortably, although he was accused by John Adams of extravagance.

On December 23, 1776, the American envoys wrote to Vergennes and requested an audience. They were granted one the 28th. They asked for a treaty of commerce and alliance, and the loan of eight ships of the line to enable them to get American ships, then blockaded in America by English vessels, out of port and off to France. This was refused, but they were offered a strictly secret loan of \$400,000, to be paid after the war without interest.

Franklin did not have any practical connection with what was going on between Beaumarchais and Deane, and even Deane did not know the connection between Beaumarchais and the French government. That did not come out for fifty years.

As it happened, Arthur Lee was an implacable enemy of Silas Deane, and, Morse says, "resembled the devil in at least one particular, in-as-much as he was the foe of all mankind." Beaumarchais early had taken a dislike to Lee, and made use of Deane in Lee's place. This angered Lee, who wrote letters to Congress not to send ships consigned to Beaumarchais, for the reason that they only went to fill the pockets of Deane and Beaumarchais. He had not a particle of evidence and there was no truth in the libel, but Congress was bewildered by contradictory letters from Beaumarchais, Deane and Lee, and refused to send the ships, and recalled Deane.

Deane tried repeatedly to get his reputation cleared from these libels of Lee, but failed because he could not, of course, produce the evidence existing in France. Franklin believed him innocent, and Deane insisted that Congress owed him \$60,000, which he could not recover. In 1835, however, Congress paid to Deane's heirs a part of the sum due him.

The real cause of Deane's recall seems to have been the following: Large numbers of French officers, especially, sought service in the American armies. They were in most part adventurers. But Deane was dazzled by their over-estimation of the invaluable assistance they could render the cause, and sent over great numbers of them. These, after they had harassed Washington nearly to death, had to be shipped back at the expense of Congress with some salve, in the way of tips, to their wounded feelings. Of course when they got back they were enemies of America.

Franklin appreciated the difficulties of Deane's position, he being unacquainted with the language, and spoke a good word for Deane to Congress, saying that he "daily proves himself to my certain knowledge, an able, faithful, active and extremely useful servant of the public, etc."

It is to be remembered, moreover, that Deane is the one who did such signal service to the colonies by commissioning Lafayette, Steuben and DeKalb. Franklin had the same trouble. He wrote:



Baron DeKalb.

"Great officers of all ranks, in all departments, ladies great and small, . . . worry me from morning to night. The noise of every coach now that enters my court terrifies me."

But he had the firmness to bluntly refuse these that importuned him, and so wrote to Washington. He drew up a "Model of a Letter of Recommendation of a person you are Unacquainted with," that was a stinging rebuke to place-hunters. Yet he recommended good men like Lafayette and Steuben with letters of real value.

In one way England was at a great disadvantage in the war. She had an enormous commerce, and the colonies early turned toward privateering as a means of harassing their enemy.

One of the first to see the advantage of such a course was Franklin in France, who early began arrangements

to make France the center of cruising in English waters. It must, of course, be borne in mind that privateering was then regarded in a much more favorable light than now. Under his direction and by his aid Conyngham and Wickes, and other gallant but reckless men fairly took Englishmen's breath away by their boldness and success. They took hosts of prizes and prisoners, and in London insurance ran up to a premium of sixty per cent, and even on boats plying between Dover and Calais, to ten per cent.

Franklin was the center of this. He issued instructions and commissions, gave orders and suggestions, paid bills, purchased ships; in fact, "he was the only American government which these independent sailors knew."

But this issuing from a neutral port to capture vessels, only to bring them back to port to condemn and sell as prizes, was contrary to international law, and at once brought the French government into trouble with England.

Vergennes wanted to avoid war with England if possible, and increased the strictness of his instructions as to neutral ports. This made the American officers angry, without reason it must be said. Their boundless assurance was something remarkable, and Franklin had to spend considerable time in keeping the peace. He very adroitly did this by correspondence and argument, requests and correcting mistakes, which all meant delay, while the American captains meantime were playing havoc with English commerce. This was possible, be-

cause Franklin well knew that secretly the French were favoring the Americans in the privateering.

But numerous captures brought another trouble. Prisoners got so numerous that Franklin did not know what to do with them. He, of course, had no place for them in France, nor could he send them to America.

Meantime the American prisoners in England were very badly used. He then tried to effect, through his old friend David Hartley, who was in Parliament and stood well with Lord North, to arrange a general scheme of exchange of prisoners. Hartley worked hard to this end, but to no purpose.

Franklin sent regularly money to England to better the condition of American prisoners there, but it was mostly embezzled by his agent.

At last Franklin had to release his British prisoners for want of means and a place to keep them.

Franklin's vexations were numberless, and a man not well poised would have succumbed to them and resigned. Thomas Morris, commercial agent for the colonies at Nantes, turned out to be a drunkard and a rascal. Franklin found it necessary to employ another, his own nephew, to take part of Morris's duties. This angered Robert Morris, brother of Thomas; but he afterward retracted his harsh words of resentment on being presented with indisputable evidence of his brother's wrong doing.

Arthur Lee now, also, had to vent his venomous hatred on Franklin and his nephew, which latter individual did his work well and honestly. Lee accused him

of being implicated with Deane in stealing money in the way of prizes. He even got the ear of John Adams, on his arrival to take Deane's place, and in an insulting manner compelled Franklin to discharge his nephew.

The year 1777 was a trying year even to the sanguine Dr. Franklin. It was the year of the retreat across New Jersey, of Valley Forge, of Howe's capture of Philadelphia, and Burgoyne's advance.

The commissioners begged for more funds

from France, and got timely but inadequate relief. The news of the fall of Philadelphia was like a dash of cold water. The French government became more and more distant, yet Franklin did not give up hope. When some Englishman said to him:

"Well, doctor, Howe has taken Philadelphia," he answered, "I beg your pardon sir, Philadelphia has taken Howe."

This proved to be true; yet even then a British cap-



Robert Morris.

tain was living in Franklin's house, tampering with his electrical machines, while the patriot's daughter with her four day's old infant had to be hurried out of the city.

So dark did the outlook become that, when the three commissioners met at Passy to discuss the situation, Deane favored demanding from France a categorical answer to the question of an alliance and, if she refused, declaring to her that the alternative was an accommodation with Great Britain. But happily both Franklin and Lee opposed this. Probably Lee opposed it because he hated Deane worse than he did Franklin.

But a good time was coming. After Bemis Heights and Stillwater, Burgoyne was compelled to surrender. Massachusetts at once sent out the Secretary of the Board of War, Jonathan Loring Austin, to acquaint France with the news. She prepared a swift sailing vessel and as soon as dispatches were ready bade the young man "God speed." For all saw at once the immense importance of getting news to France without delay.

The vessel made a quick passage and early in December Austin arrived at Passy. When his carriage was heard in the court all the Americans were ready to receive him and before he could alight Franklin asked whether Philadelphia was really taken, and when the messenger answered "Yes," the old man turned sorrowfully away as if to enter the house. Then Austin exclaimed that Burgoyne and his whole army were prisoners of war.

The joy of the American legation was too deep for expression. Deane said: "The news was like a sovereign cordial for the dying."

Soon dispatches were sent to Vergennes at Versailles. At once all Paris knew it and burst into acclamations. Soon all Europe knew it, too, and felt that the colonies at last were lost to Great Britain.

The attitude of the French ministry immediately changed. Two days after the news was received M. Gerard called to say that a renewal of negotiations for an alliance would be agreeable to the French government. In a few days the Cabinet met and the envoys went to Versailles, where in a concealed spot in the wood they had a long conversation with Vergennes. But Spain also had to be consulted and this led to some delay. So did a disagreement over a clause that no export duty should be levied on molasses taken from the French West Indian islands to the colonies for the manufacture of rum. 'This was of importance because our forefathers, while extremely strict religionists, had succeeded in making molasses for rum the "basis on which a very great part of the American commerce rested."'

M. Gerard demanded a reciprocal concession, which Franklin shrewdly drew up in the shape of an agreement not to lay export duties on articles purchased in the colonies for the French West Indies. At first Arthur Lee agreed to this, but afterward objected under the influence of William Lee and Ralph Izard, after the King had approved the treaty and it had been engrossed. Gerard was disgusted with good reason, but finally consented to leave both exemptions to the decision of Congress.

On February 6th, all parties met to sign the treaty

which, according to the stipulation, was to be kept secret until ratified by Congress. At the signing of the treaty Franklin wore the suit of Manchester velvet he had worn when so grievously insulted in the Privy Council.

France had feared some accommodation between the colonies and Great Britain, and this accounts for her increasing liberality, and also for her desire for secrecy until Congress acted on the treaty. There was some ground for this fear, for after Burgoyne surrendered to "Mr. Gates," Lord North introduced into Parliament two conciliatory bills which were "to restore the form of constitution as it stood before the trouble."

But the bills were passed too late, for the treaty was already signed, and news of it had already come to the ears of Charles Fox and the opposition. They were passed, however, and reached America almost at the same time with the French treaty, and, of course, were promptly rejected by Congress.

Meantime, Franklin, who always kept in communication with the opposition party in England, sent Austin, for whom he had conceived a great regard, on a secret mission to Great Britain. He was to acquaint the opposition with the latest news and the real state of affairs in the colonies. He accomplished his purpose with skill; lived in the family of the Earl of Shelburne under the protection of Dr. Priestley; was introduced to the Prince of Wales and Charles Fox, and was present at the meetings of the opposition.

Of course no reconciliation with Great Britain which

Franklin had to do with was possible, for the King hated Franklin with an extreme personal hatred which Franklin fully reciprocated

The treaty of commerce signed at the same time as



Voltaire.

that of alliance inserted the principle which Franklin favored, *i. e.*, that free ships should make free goods and free persons, also, except soldiers. After the treaty was signed Voltaire came back to Paris, and the two aged

men met upon the stage of the Academy of Sciences and saluted each other, whereupon, Frenchmanlike, the crowd went wild with enthusiasm, and embraced one another to see the "new Solon and Sophocles" exchange greetings.

Gerard soon went out as the first French envoy to the United States, and with him went Deane. Their departure was kept secret from Lee who took offense and still further pestered the Doctor with his untiring malevolence.

Morse says that there probably remain few epithets in the English language which have not at some time or another been applied to Lee. He deserved them all for he did immense mischief. Vergennes hated him and all Europe ridiculed his want of capacity. Franklin charitably called him insane.

When John Adams arrived in Paris to take Deane's place, he found papers in confusion and books and accounts badly kept, because a perfectly enormous amount of labor had been put upon the commission with no clerical help. He was much disposed to lay the blame on Franklin at first, but soon found out that the condition of affairs with three envoys and no clerical force could not be helped. He therefore advised reducing the number to one envoy. Lee with his intense egotism thought he would be the one designated, but not so. Franklin was left in France, Lee accredited to Spain as at first, and Adams was recalled to America.

The struggle in Congress to ruin Dr. Franklin and procure his recall and to put Arthur Lee in his place was a bitter one. It was a cabal like that of Conway against

Washington and was due, as was Deane's ruin, to the almost unheard of malevolence of Arthur Lee.

Under Franklin's assistance naval operations began again with John Paul Jones as commander. He embarrassed the Britons even more than Conyngham and Wickes; made incursions on land, spiked guns in forts and burnt ships under the very noses of Englishmen before they could recover from their astonishment.

His famous fight with the "*Serapis*" is well known. It stirs the blood yet to read of the engagement, but it has a ridiculous side, for it strongly excites the humor to think of the crazy

Frenchman, Landais, captain under Jones, during the battle sailing up and down, firing broadside after broadside into the "*Bon Homme Richard*" of his commander, too crazy with excitement to know what he was about. Soon Landais quarrelled with Jones and Franklin had to patch up that difference. Landais afterward went insane.

The financial duties of Franklin proved to be the most vexatious and humiliating that he had to perform. Congress carried on the war without available funds or any direct means of deriving funds. They resorted to two methods of meeting their obligations, *i. e.*, issuing irredeemable paper money and borrowing abroad.

Congress had no revenues because it could lay no tax-



John Paul Jones.

es. It could only call on the states to pay their quotas. If they saw fit to do so, well and good, if not, Congress had to get along without them, for there was no way in which it could compel the states.

It follows of course that Congress could give no security for loans, and we have the absurd picture of a debtor who is utterly irresponsible asking the loan of funds. All that the creditor could do was to trust in Providence. To be sure the states did pay a little in dribblets as they were called upon, but the sums were entirely inadequate.

The paper money circulated in the colonies, but would not, of course, circulate abroad, and even in the colonies it began at once to depreciate. The outcome of this all was that the burden fell on the envoys to Europe who were really sent over there to borrow or beg what they could from foreign nations.

But this does not complete the picture. Jay found it impossible to get money in Spain, as did John Adams in Holland. More than that; just as soon as their envoys had left the shores of America, Congress began sending after them drafts for large amounts, with the supremest indifference as to how they could get the money to pay the drafts.

They even sent drafts on Henry Laurens who was captured and sent to London Tower. The absurdity of it all has never been surpassed.

All these drafts centered on Franklin, who was the only one who succeeded in getting money, and we must think of a continuous snow-fall of drafts on his devoted head, until he floundered about in great difficulty and

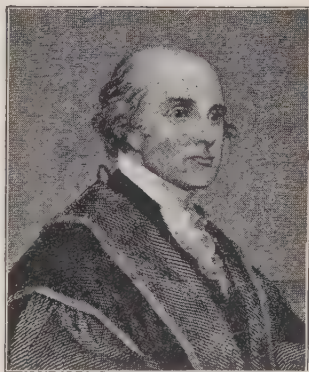
was forever trying to extricate himself. He had even to pay Jay's household expenses in Spain because Congress did not furnish him his salary.

The cargoes of tobacco, rice, indigo, etc., that were to offset these drafts for the most part never came. Sometimes the ship's captain ran off with them; sometimes the ships foundered; but oftener the British captured them. Franklin said with a sigh, that it simply resulted in the English getting all these goods for nothing.

Then Arthur Lee and Izard drew on him for \$10,000 each, on the ground that they were about to go to Spain and Italy respectively, to which countries they were accredited; and then they never went. They did not fail, however, to use up the money.

The brave seamen who had fought in the European waters for the colonies demanded their pay, and Franklin had to put them off with one suit of clothes apiece.

To add to the trouble, the individual states began to flood Europe with agents for the purpose of borrowing money, and Congress seemed to be about as unconcerned as school boys about drawing bills on anybody and everybody.



John Jay.

But Franklin carried the burden to the end without dropping it, thanks to the very remarkable good nature and kindness of Vergennes and the French government. The services of Franklin in this regard can hardly be overdrawn; they were of extreme importance.

Congress never allowed Franklin, a man of over seventy years of age, a secretary or copyist, and when he took his grandson William Temple Franklin as a secretary, he did it on his own responsibility and could pay him, sometimes his board, sometimes not even that.

Yet Congress because of Lee and others, persecuted the old man through his grandson, formed a cabal against him and threatened to discharge the young man. Big business Congress was in! Franklin had asked many times that Congress do something in recognition of the services of William Temple Franklin who had sacrificed his prospects in life to act as the secretary to his grandfather. Franklin never asked but this one favor. Congress put the request aside with contemptuous indifference.

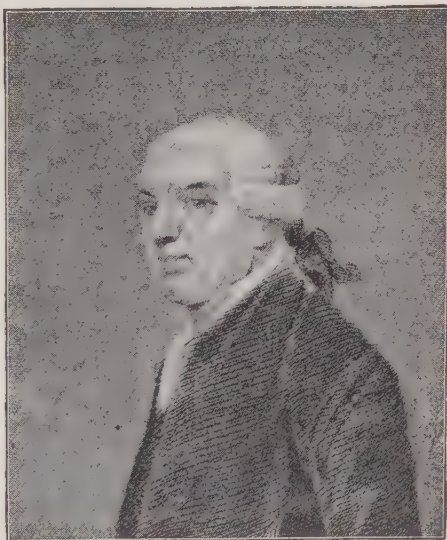
We can easily see why at the end of the Revolution and during the time of the Articles of Confederation, Congress had lost the respect of the people.

Finally March, 1781, Franklin determined to resign, but then Congress took alarm and refused to accept his resignation. It had refused any proper appointment and salary for his grandson; had almost always neglected any expression of thanks for his untiring services for his country, many of them entirely outside of his regular province; but when he was worn out and disheart-

ened and wanted rest and quiet, they refused to give him that.

Meantime Adams had been sent back, having been appointed with Franklin, Jay, Laurens and Jefferson, to treat for peace.

Adams at once set about stirring up a hornet's nest in the French ministry by usurping part of Franklin's prerogatives, and gratuitously instructing Vergennes on matters connected with America. Vergennes disliked Adams extremely, much as he did Lee.



Henry Laurens.

When Congress passed the act to redeem the continental currency, a considerable of which Frenchmen held, far below its face value, Adams sent Vergennes word of it. The minister was much exasperated, and protested against the injustice of it as far as the French were concerned. Adams was then so lacking in tact as to write a strong defence of the action of Congress, and the quar-

rel grew so bitter that both parties had to call in Franklin to patch up a peace.

From the very beginning of the war England had made efforts to come to some understanding with the United States. The British government showed its appreciation of Franklin by directing all of its attention in these matters to him. He stood in Europe for America.

Franklin's old friend Hartley had been especially forward in schemes for peace. They tried to frighten Franklin about the harm that would come to the colonies through "throwing themselves into the arms" of their ancient enemy, France.

But such efforts on the part of England were too thinly veiled to be effective with the astute old man. Franklin did not propose that the colonies should throw over a friend who was helping them to freedom for any enemy who was trying to enslave them. The battle of Yorktown was the beginning of the end. The commissioners from America to treat for peace were appointed. Lord North's ministry fell, and Rockingham formed one of friends of America in which was Charles Fox and Lord Shelburne.

The negotiations developed many conflicting interests. Lord Shelburne had some idea of making independence a matter of treaty and providing for some sort of federal union instead of entire independence.

Fox, who was hostile to Shelburne and wished to control the negotiations, offered to grant immediate independence. This split in the Cabinet led to sending two envoys to France both trying to divide France and the

United States. The treaty of 1778 between the United States and France provided that neither party should make peace except in conjunction with the other, and England tried, in spite of this, to deal with the United States and France separately. But both Vergennes and Franklin refused to be parties to such a scheme.

Spain also made a disturbing element. She had been in alliance with France and England and had claims for territory in America and elsewhere that she wished to further. So perplexing did affairs become that Franklin sent for Jay in hot haste to come from Spain to aid him, Adams being yet in Holland.

When Jay got to Paris he was convinced that France was undertaking to deal with England secretly, to prevent the right of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland going into the treaty. He insisted also that independence should not be a matter of treaty, but should be acknowledged before any treaty was made. This Franklin was inclined to waive.

So convinced was Jay that Vergennes had sent an agent to make secret arrangements with Lord Shelburne, then at the head of the English ministry, that he alone, on his own responsibility, sent Vaughan secretly to prove to the English minister that England's advantage lay in siding with the United States. Vaughan did his duty well and was sent back with an amended document empowering the English agent to treat with the Commissioners of the Thirteen United States of America. Jay had won.

Meantime Vergennes had been using his influence on Congress through the French minister, and Congress

sent over stringent orders as to the treaty, that American demands outside of independence should not stand in the way of the purposes of France.

This still further convinced Jay that France intended to jeopardize the interests of the United States in regard to matters other than independence. He favored disobeying the specific commands of Congress. On this point, as on several others, he and Franklin sharply differed, for Franklin could not believe that France would act unworthily of herself. To the advice of Jay to conduct the negotiations without the knowledge of France, he responded: "No."

It was a deadlock, but Adams soon arrived from Holland sided with Jay. Franklin then had to give way, and did so without a quarrel. He decided to stand by his colleagues and refrain from communicating with Vergennes.

In this whole matter both Jay and Adams had an axe to grind. Jay wanted the Mississippi made the Western boundary with the right of navigation of the river. Adams wanted to procure the right of fishing off Newfoundland. France opposed both these demands; the first on account of her ally, Spain; the second on her own account. When they got rid of her by making a secret treaty, they won both points.

Such concessions drove Shelburne out of power for it was seen that the commissioners for the United States had done a brilliant piece of work. Of course Vergennes was indignant at the manner in which the treaty was arrived at and wrote sharp letters to Franklin, who explained

the matter best as he could. As often happens in such cases, Jay and Adams were condemned at home because they did not side with France, and Franklin because he did.

In 1782 after the treaty, Franklin resigned a second time, but Congress kept him there until March, 1785, when it voted his return. These years were spent in making commercial treaties with Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Morocco and Prussia. The one with Prussia called for the abolishment of privateering.

Jefferson succeeded Franklin, and when he was asked "C'est vous, Monsieur, qui remplace le Docteur Franklin?" he replied: "No one can replace him, sir; I am only his successor."

The Doctor left France in the summer of 1785, although several persons had offered him a home as long as he lived. But he desired to spend the rest of his days with his family. When he left he carried a portrait of the King framed in a double circle of four hundred and eight diamonds of great cost and beauty. He crossed the channel to take ship at Portsmouth, and the British government did him the honor to exempt his baggage from examination. His son William, who was a Tory, came to see him, and a partial reconciliation took place between them.

On September 14, 1785, the ship on which Franklin sailed came in full view of Philadelphia. For this city he had a genuine affection, and called it "dear Philadelphia." When he landed at the Market Street wharf he was "received by a crowd of people with huzzas, and accompanied with acclamations quite to my door.

God be praised and thanked for all his mercies." He received endless addresses, both public and private, congratulating him on his return, and they all show great consideration and even affection.

His health was now fairly good, and in his letter to Mr. and Mrs. Jay he says that he finds himself rather better for the voyage. But his countrymen could not do without his services. They at once elected him councillor for Philadelphia, and on taking his seat he was chosen President of Pennsylvania.

In a letter to his sister he says in a playful way that he could not resist the desire of his people, and added that when sent to France he had said:

"They have eaten my flesh and seem resolved now to pick my bones." Dr. Cooper, to whom he said this, replied: "The nearer the bone the sweeter the meat."

Yet Franklin was pleased, nevertheless, at their regard for him, and refused to accept any pay for his services in behalf of his fellow citizens. Investments in real estate in Philadelphia had turned out well, and he was in affluent circumstances. He lived in a house which his faithful wife had built several years before. Surrounded by his daughter and her family, his friends and his books, the old man enjoyed a quiet life in his garden with cribbage and chess. He speaks in his letters in a very affectionate way of his grandchildren, whose innocent play pleased his old age. Yet he was never idle. Nor had he ceased to be a joker. He wrote an article for the "Pennsylvania Gazette," professing to advocate the transportation of American

felons to England, as English felons had been before transported to America. "No due returns," he says, "have yet been made for these valuable consignments."

He failed, however, to seize one opportunity of his life. John Fitch visited him often and tried to gain his assistance for a new invention—a steamboat. But Franklin could see no value in the contrivance and grievously offended Fitch by offering him money in charity.

The feebleness of the government under the Articles of Confederation caused him, as it did other patriots, great anxiety; and especially as reports as to the demoralization of the United States were general in Europe. But by private letters he demonstrated to his friends in England that things were not so bad as reported.

In 1786 he wrote to a friend of the manner in which he passed his time, in official labors, in study and recreation in which music played a part. He had been so persistent a worker that he had now and then some compunction about being so idle as he thought himself; "but another reflection," he says, "comes to relieve me, whispering, You know that the soul is immortal; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you?"

The famous letter supposed to have been written to Thomas Paine upon his work, "The Age of Reason," although undated, belongs to this period. Parton believes it to have been written not to Paine but to Dr. Edward Bancroft. No one ever penned a more telling rebuke to infidel writings, and this incident serves to show what a remarkable change had come over Frank-

lin since he penned his heretical tract in London. He still was interested in the education of the young, and took great trouble to assist in the location at Lancaster of a college for Germans.

Meanwhile the condition of the government was becoming unbearable. Its impotence was well shown by frequent domestic troubles, riots and general disturbances. In fact, Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts was the thing that frightened Washington into withdrawing his declination to attend the Constitutional Convention.

Franklin was not at first elected a delegate from Pennsylvania; but was added afterward, as Parton says, in order that, in case Washington still refused, there might be some one on whom all could unite as president of the convention. It is not necessary to say much about this convention, a subject on which so much has been written. It is to be noted, however, that Franklin ranged himself against a strongly centralized government. That is, he allied himself with what came to be the Jefferson party and not with the Hamilton party.

This fact no doubt had weight in forcing the convention away from a form of government whose centralizing tendencies would have been too strong to be wise. As he had practiced, so he now preached. He opposed granting any salary to the president, as he had refused to accept any salary as president of Pennsylvania. The honor was a reward sufficient for any man.

Such was the spirit of the early years of devotion to liberty, and such the romantic fervor of the first pure love of freedom. Would that more of it was left! He was

in favor of a legislature of one house and against the equality of states. When the struggle between the opposing parties on the last named subject seemed about to disrupt the convention, his compromise saved the Union. When the Constitution was finished, he found as many others did, that not all parts were satisfactory to him personally, yet he heartily supported it. When the instrument was signed, looking toward the President's chair on which a sun was painted, he said he had not up to that time been able to tell whether it was a rising or a setting sun; but on the happy termination of the convention he said: "I have the happiness to know that is a rising and not a setting sun."

It is remarkable that Franklin was one of only three or four persons in the convention that thought prayers necessary at the opening of each session.

After the adjournment he exerted himself to promote the adoption of the Constitution, and when ten states had ratified, they had in Philadelphia a great celebration and a procession in which was a printer's car which struck off, as it proceeded, and scattered among the people, a ditty which Franklin himself had written.

He was elected a third time President of Pennsylvania although eighty one years old, and said of himself:

"I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been abed and asleep." Such was his idea of death.

His growing infirmities warned him that his end was not far off, and he looked forward to the end of life with complaisance, for he was, he said, growing curious to

find out something of another world. He suffered much pain, too, at intervals, but bore it with patience and firmness. He wrote to a friend in November of 1788: "People that will live a long life and drink to the bottom of the cup must expect to meet with some of the dregs."

Providence allowed him to live long enough to see his country, for which he had long labored, established under a secure and vigorous government with George Washington, whom he supported, as its first President.

He lived long enough, also, to see the beginning of that terrible upheaval—the French Revolution. He was profoundly interested, yet he did not understand the genius of the movement as Jefferson did. Franklin, when in France, had seen the fair side of the French life; he had known the educated class of nobility; he had not explored the lower walks of life, the highways and hedges, as Jefferson had, to see how the peasant lived and toiled and died.

The last months of his life he spent mostly in bed, an acute sufferer. Yet when the pain ceased for a time he was again at work.

He was a hater of slavery and one of his last acts was a memorial addressed to Congress, as president of the abolition society, to discourage the slave trade and remove that "inconsistency from the character" of American government. And as late as March 23, 1790, he wrote a characteristic answer to the pro-slavery speech in Congress of Jackson of Georgia.

Franklin died April 17, 1790, aged eighty four years

and three months. France mourned over his death as sincerely and with more recognition of his great worth than his own country. Mirabeau delivered a eulogy and the President of the National Assembly communicated to Washington their resolution to wear mourn-



Franklin's Grave, Christ's Churchyard, Cor. Fifth and Arch Streets, Philadelphia.

ing for three days. Yet after all he had done for his country he never succeeded in getting Congress to put aside its indifference enough to audit his accounts and discharge them.

It has been well said that Franklin attracts even in the readers of his life a personal regard. He had many

friends and they were close and constant. Even in England during the war this was true. He had some enemies. The proprietary party hated him bitterly and that feeling has been handed down. The Adams party in New England disliked him and have handed down that dislike to their descendants.

Franklin was great intellectually as few men have been great. He was great in his diversity of powers; and his range of activities was remarkable. He was great morally, and he had a very wide and remarkable influence as a moral teacher. His moral teachings, although not always of the highest type, are helpful and wholesome.

He never announced himself as a follower of Jesus Christ, and it is unfortunate that it is true. He wrote to Dr. Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, that he thought the system of morals taught by Jesus of Nazareth the best world ever saw or was likely to see; yet he had to confess "some doubts as to his divinity," although on that subject he did not pretend to dogmatize. It seems certain, however, that he underwent an enormous change in his lifetime in his attitude toward religious and moral truth.

As he grew older he drew nearer and nearer to the Christian ideal of faith as well as works. For when his end was about to come, he had a picture of Christ upon the Cross placed where he could keep his eyes upon it, and with his eyes upon that pledge of sacrifice he died. For he was accustomed to say:

"That is the picture of one who came into the world to teach men to love one another."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

(1706-1790.)

By G. MERCER ADAM*

AMONG historic Americans of the era preceding and during the continuance of the Revolutionary War must be reckoned the eminent and endeared name of Benjamin Franklin. He is one of the characteristic figures of his time, a man of great practical resource, and of varied gifts and usefulness in numberless walks of life. Though without educational training, save what he laboriously and praiseworthy gave to himself, he nevertheless showed great versatility of attainments as a scientist, philosopher, pamphleteer, and man of affairs; was endowed with marked qualities of humor and much worldly wisdom, and possessed the most kindly interest in his fellowmen, while manifesting in his own career and life-history a noble simplicity of nature. In the sphere of statecraft and diplomacy, he was, alike in England and in France, of high service to his country at a critical era in its annals, and a notable and useful public man at home, where his honored name is identified with, as it is attached to, most of the important public documents of his age and nation. His essays, apothegms, and miscellaneous writings, and especially his entertaining "Auto-

*Historian, Biographer, and Essayist, Author of a "Précis of English History," a "Continuation of Grecian History," etc., and for many years Editor of *Self-Culture Magazine*.—The Publishers.

biography," are all worthy additions to the early literature of the country, as they are characteristic of the man, and attest the breadth and vigor of a mind open to all knowledge. A profound student of the books of the better and more instructive class, of which he was ever a painstaking and sedulous reader, he was also a loving and acute observer of Nature, and an interesting experimenter in the field of physical science. It was while engrossed in his miscellaneous avocations that he made the discovery, by a simple experiment with a kite, that lightning is a discharge of electricity, and for this, in 1753, he received from the Royal Society of England the Copley medal, and placed himself among the most eminent natural philosophers of his day. He was also noted for his inventiveness, and for his shrewd, practical mind, as is seen in his invention of the stove, the lightning rod, and the water-organ; while most praiseworthy were his labors as an early citizen of Philadelphia in organizing the first fire-protection company and the first police force. Nor subordinate to these evidences of good and useful citizenship were his efforts in inciting the Philadelphia municipality to pave the city streets, erect and maintain a city hospital, found a circulating library, and organize a local military force for the protection of life and public property. His services to journalism and popular literature are also to be reckoned among the talents he made excellent use of in enriching the mind and thought of his time; besides the impetus he gave to higher education and scientific study in founding the American Philosophical Society and a college in Philadelphia that afterwards blossomed into the University of Pennsylvania.

Benjamin Franklin was born at Boston, Massachusetts, January 17, 1706, where his father was a tallow-chandler of poor estate, with a large family to provide for. He managed, however, to give Benjamin a little schooling, which the young lad industriously supplemented by private reading, and by an apprenticeship to his elder brother James, who in connection with a small printing establishment published a newspaper, called "The New England Courant." For this journal, Benjamin wrote a number of articles and in time acquired a good style as a writer, improved by habits of assiduous reading, especially of excellent English authors, such as Bunyan, Addison, and others. The political atmosphere of Boston was then not over favorable to independent writing, and his brother having got into trouble with the authorities over some political critique that had given offense, Benjamin one day got on board a packet-ship for New York and casting about for employment found his way to Philadelphia.

Here, in the city with which, later on, he was to be closely identified and by its people widely and favorably known, he resumed the printing trade, and after a while secured the favorable notice of the Governor, Sir Wm. Keith, and other influential citizens. Writing elsewhere of the embryo journalist-printer at this era, we have recorded the fact that the Governor effusively desired to aid young Franklin in his printing industries and promised to procure a printing press and type for him in London if the youth would go thither. Franklin eagerly assented to this; but, when he sailed, it was found that the Governor had either changed his mind or conveniently forgotten his promise, so that when

London was reached the future natural philosopher and statesman had to toil for his daily bread. He, however, worked as a printer in London until 1726, when he returned to Philadelphia and went back to his former employer. Later on, we find him established in a printing business of his own, in connection with which, in 1729, he acquired part-proprietorship of the "Pennsylvania Gazette" and ere long placed it at the head of American journals.

In journalism, Franklin was not long in achieving success, for he had already, as we have seen, plumed his wing in the Press in the discussion of current events in the "New England Courant," as well as under the pen name of "Busybody" and other authorship concealments of his aspiring though modest pen. He was moreover aided by his expertness and experience as a practical printer; while his familiarity with governmental and financial questions and his advocacy in his journal of paper money gained him the public printing of the paper currency. Besides all this, he was a man of thrift, as well as an industrious and intelligent one, and had meanwhile made a sensible and happy marriage, his help-meet being one who could manage her household frugally and assist in the little economies of a well-ordered, modest home. A felicitous editorial and publishing venture at this era contributed alike to his fame and his prosperity, in the publication of "Poor Richard's Almanac," which continued to be issued annually for a quarter of a century, and had a great vogue among all classes and, for the time, a phenomenal sale. The annual, which first appeared in 1732, was made the vehicle for conveying instruc-

tion to the common people, and particularly as the medium for inculcating—generally by way of proverbs, wise saws, and homely maxims—moral teaching, inciting to thrift, temperance, forgiveness, chastity, cleanliness, order, and general propriety of conduct, sandwiched in with other useful information respecting the remarkable days of the Calendar. The publication was thus a unique and meritorious one, and worthy of the success it met with. Its contemporary fame is shown by the fact that it was reprinted in England; while many of its proverbial sayings were translated and circulated in France and other countries, and became, as it were, current coin.

Of the materialism of the eighteenth century Franklin was an especial product, due partly to early bias and his own precocity, and partly to his miscellaneous reading, which had included a good many irreligious books, and some even of an infidel, or, as we should say to-day, an agnostic, character. The bent of his mind, moreover, was scientific, and therefore coldly critical and calculating; while his early youth-time had been one of much freedom and rather careless living, which, before marriage, had saddled him with the responsible upbringing of an illegitimate child—who afterwards, by the way, became Tory Governor of New Jersey. Now, however, among the good Quakers of Philadelphia with whom he lived, as a public-spirited and respectable citizen, and having married happily, and become prosperous in business, he sloughed off his early infidelities and sanely recognized God and His providential dealings in the world. His "Poor Richard's Almanac," at any rate, was free from any anti-moral taint, and, as we

have said, was full of wholesome, instructive matter, with wise exhortations to a life of thrift, frugality, and good-living. In this respect, Franklin was to his generation a sort of moral lawgiver; but with that grave assumption of the functions of a mentor and teacher of his day, he was most genial, and even witty, as well as, at times, delightfully ironical. Many of his maxims have become proverbial sayings, recited and pondered over not only at Colonial firesides, but familiar round the world. Some of them, such as the following, are perhaps not so well known, and will bear quoting here: "Plough deep while sluggards sleep;" "Necessity never made a good bargain;" "Do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of;" "Keep your eyes open before marriage, and half-shut afterwards;" "Those have a short Lent who owe money to be paid at Easter." Another of his wise retorts may be cited, as showing his sense of humor, as well as his knowledge of his fellowman and the world: "Friend Franklin," said a prominent Quaker lawyer to him one day, "thou knowest everything—canst thou tell me how I am to preserve my small beer in the backyard?—for I find that my neighbors are tapping it for me." "Put a barrel of Madeira beside it," was the sage's apt and ready rejoinder.

Possessed of so amiable a nature and a character above reproach among his fellows, it is little wonder that Franklin became a man of note in Philadelphia, whose good people sought to engage him in every public duty and elevated him even to office. He had no enemies, for his own genial temper and pleasant relations with all inspired none. On

the other hand, he had numberless friends whose weal, and that of the city he was now so prominently identified with, were his chief concern; and no year passed without adding to the number of those who admired the man and held him in high esteem. At this period he took upon himself new duties of an exacting social and public nature, besides founding reading clubs, libraries, and societies for mental improvement and debate, and devoting what leisure he could snatch to acquiring personally a knowledge of French, Italian, and Spanish, as well as some acquaintance with the Latin tongue. Meanwhile, he pursued his scientific experiments, chiefly in the field of electricity and its phenomena, and interested himself in his practical and useful inventions. As he now retired from business, having secured from it a comfortable independence, he took interest in civic and legislative affairs, became postmaster of Philadelphia and later deputy-Postmaster General of the Colonies, a member of the Provincial General Assembly, and engrossed with matters connected with the militia and its equipment in the French and Indian war that had now broken out.

In the affairs of the General Assembly much was then occurring in which Franklin took considerable patriotic interest. We refer to the contention with the then Governor of Pennsylvania, James Hamilton, who represented the Penn family, the great landed proprietaries of the Province. This English official, it seems, opposed the levy of a tax on the estates of the Penns to meet the expenses of the Colony in the French and Indian, or, to use the historical English term applied to the strug-

gle—the Seven Years' war. The Penn family, then residing abroad, were themselves selfish and somewhat niggardly in their sense of what was required of them in the fulfillment of their public duties; while their local representative upheld the family in declining to pay their proportion of the Provincial levy. This attitude of both drew from Franklin a bitter arraignment in the Assembly, the outburst falling chiefly on the Governor, as their representative and agent. The Assembly now determined to appeal the matter in dispute to the Crown, and made choice of Franklin to proceed to England to lay the case before the English Lords of Trade, who had control at this era of Colonial affairs. Just before this, Franklin, who had become, as we have seen, a prominent man and public leader in Philadelphia, was despatched as a delegate to a Congress of Commissioners from the different Colonies assembled at Albany, by order of the English Lords of Trade, to confer on a plan of defense for their common protection.

Acquitting himself of the duties required of him at Albany, Franklin returned to Philadelphia, and then set out for England, in 1757, on the mission with which he had been entrusted by the General Assembly of the Province. On arrival there and probing the matter of which he had the care, he found that the Penns stood upon what they deemed their prerogatives; while the Crown showed great laxness or indifference in pressing the Pennsylvania claim to an issue. Franklin now appealed the matter to the Privy Council, and by it was sustained in his and the Province's contention, the Privy Council deciding that the proprietary estates of the Penns should contribute their pro-

portion of the public revenue. The decision was a **righteous** and a just one ; and though it came late and cost Franklin years of delay to secure it, it was naturally a triumph to him and to the Colony which had sent him as its representative.

In England, at this time, Franklin spent altogether about five years, and during the visit he employed himself assiduously, and did much among public men to enlighten them as to the state of affairs in America and to further the interests especially of Pennsylvania. He also had the opportunity of conferring with many eminent scientific, political, and literary men of the era, who took a warm and kindly interest in his own scientific researches and applauded his discoveries ; while notable members of the Royal Society paid him many courtesies, and the Universities of St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and Oxford rewarded him with honorary degrees.

In 1762, Franklin returned to America to find the Colonies in great perturbation over the question of English taxation and the other acts of political injustice and oppression that roused the people to resistance and were soon to lead to armed revolt. By this time, George III, who had been under the tutelage of a Scotch Tory, Lord Bute, had come to the throne, and with his obsequious and corrupt "King's Party" and his own stubborn mood and narrow-mindedness, was, in spite of the remonstrances of great Whig statesmen such as Fox and Pitt, fast making a mockery of responsible government in England ; while by numberless oppressive acts on the part of his ministers he was

irritating and alienating the American Colonies. To meet England's debt incurred during the Seven Years' War, Grenville's Stamp Act was about to be put in force. But the Colonists, as all know, objected to be taxed without their consent, and without representation in the English Parliament, and declared that they were sufficiently oppressed by the burden of customs' duties which had already been imposed upon them. The Stamp Act was nevertheless passed, in spite of the protest of the Colonial Assemblies; but the obnoxious measure, as every schoolboy knows, met with such opposition in this country that, at Pitt's urgent solicitation, it was ultimately withdrawn. Parliament, however, passed another Act declaring its authority over the Colonies in matters of legislation and taxation, and this greatly increased the soreness of feeling on this side the Atlantic against the mother country. The irritation was far from being allayed when a subsequent administration imposed various small customs' duties on American imports, but chiefly upon tea. In retaliation, the Colonists determined not to use this article. The spirit of resistance was soon now to take an historic and a determined form; for, on the one hand, the king and his ministers stubbornly insisted on England's right to derive some benefit from her Colonies; while, on the other hand, the Colonists as stubbornly held to the principle of no taxation without representation, and upheld the rights of their own assemblies. Ere long, the Grenville ministry passed away, with its successors under the leadership of Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Grafton, and was followed by the administration of Lord North. Pitt, who meanwhile had become Earl of Chatham, was for

a time a member of the Grafton ministry, but resigned on the plea of ill-health. Partly recovering his strength, he became a vehement opponent of Lord North's government. Throughout the trouble with the Colonists, he was a staunch supporter of their cause, and in Parliament eloquently denounced arbitrary measures against them.

While these seeds of disaffection were being ruthlessly sown in the New World, the cause of liberty and emancipation from England's tyranny was being nobly served by the patriots, James Otis, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams of Boston, and his cousin John Adams of Quincy, Mass., who, with Franklin, were the great pioneers of American Independence. Meanwhile, Franklin, still desirous of reconciliation with the mother country, had again proceeded thither, at the request of the Province of Philadelphia, but this time as diplomat, rather than as financial agent. There, the valiant Doctor, actuated by his spirit of justice and armed with the weapons of reason, energetically sought to dissuade England's infatuated ministers from imposing the Stamp Act on the Colonies; and after the Bill had been passed (March, 1765) by an immense majority in Parliament, he still endeavored to bring about its repeal. A year later, he and all reasonable loyalists were gratified at seeing the obnoxious measure withdrawn, though repeal brought with it, as has been hinted, the fall of the Grenville, and its replacement by Lord North's, ministry. About this time, while continuing to represent Pennsylvania in England, Franklin was commissioned to act as agent there for Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia, and for some years he exercised an influence such as probably has never been pos-

sessed by any other American representative at the English Court.

At this period, Franklin was greatly prejudiced in England, as well as much hindered in his negotiations with the ministry of the day, by a circumstance which just then occurred. This was the possession which Franklin had somehow obtained of inflammatory letters sent to the English Colonial office by Thomas Hutchinson, the Tory governor of Massachusetts, reciting in an aggressive and bitter manner the condition of things in that Colony. A copy of these letters, however he got access to the originals, Franklin, it seems, forwarded to a prominent member of the Massachusetts General Court as a matter of information and for his own guidance, but coupled with an injunction to keep them, or rather knowledge of them, from the public ear and eye. In spite of the precaution, the secret was however not kept, and its getting abroad aroused great indignation against Governor Hutchinson, and a petition was soon put in circulation seeking his removal from office, which was forwarded to Franklin for presentation to the English Government. Noise of the storm which the publication of the letters had created in the Colony, of course, was soon heard in England, and amid the excitements of the time Franklin was overwhelmed with obloquy for having surreptitiously obtained possession of or access to the letters, and for having sent copies of them to Boston to stir up angry feeling against the Governor and make trouble with England.

The situation in London for the patriotic diplomat was now most uncomfortable, and led to many snubs in influential quarters, and to his being deprived of the office he had

held in America since 1753 of deputy Postmaster-General of the Colonies. His presentation of the petition for Hutchinson's removal, observes a writer, "afforded an opportunity for his being publicly insulted at the hearing appointed before the Committee for Plantation Affairs, while the press denounced him as a fomentor of sedition. His work in England was done, and although he remained there some time longer, on the chance of still being of possible use, he gladly availed himself of an opportunity, early in 1775, to return to America. Before his departure, however, Lord Chatham had come to his rescue, when he was one day attacked with bitterness in the House of Lords, and pronounced upon him this splendid eulogium: 'If,' said the great statesman, 'I were prime-minister and had the care of settling this momentous business, I should not be ashamed to call to my assistance a person so well acquainted with American affairs, —one whom all Europe ranks with our Boyles and Newtons, as an honor, not to the English nation only, but to human nature itself.'"

In 1775, at the age of sixty-nine, when Franklin saw that a conflict with the mother country was almost inevitable, he again set sail for Philadelphia. On the morning of his arrival, he was elected by the Assembly, of which he was still a member, delegate to the Second Continental Congress which placed General Washington at the head of the Colonial armies. By this Congress, Franklin, who, as we have seen, had been dismissed from the office of Deputy-Postmaster-General, which he held under the Crown, was appointed Postmaster-General of the united Colonies. In the following year (1776) he was one of the Committee of Five that

drew up the "Declaration of Independence." In the same year he was chosen president of the convention called to frame a constitution for the State of Pennsylvania. He was also selected by Congress to discuss conciliatory proposals with the English Admiral, Lord Howe, in July, 1776; and in the following September was deputed with Silas Deane and Arthur Lee to solicit financial assistance from the Court of France. French interest in America in the struggle now on with the motherland was, of course, largely due to ingrained dislike of England, especially among the privileged classes, and to the opportunity it afforded France at once to wreak vengeance upon a nation boasting of her representative institutions, and to show her sympathy with its Colonies in the New World whose watchwords were "Liberty and Equality." Her sympathy for the Colonies was, however, at first more active than was her financial aid; though, later on, France sent across the water both a fleet and an army, and also lent them money. At the outset, she was nevertheless deterred from openly espousing the American cause, lest it might give umbrage to England, whose fleet she feared; while both nations were exhausted by the Seven Years' War, and the French monarchy and the titled classes were just then given up to pleasure. This is the explanation of the circumspect way in which France at the time gave monetary and other aid to the Colonies, making use of the colorable device of a mercantile firm, whose manager was Beaumarchais, to send them supplies, which were indirectly paid for from the royal exchequer.

When Franklin reached Paris, the mode in which France was helping the Colonists in revolt was just then leaking

out, through some indiscretion on the part of Silas Deane. This was not only embarrassing to the commissioner, but led to the recall of Deane and his replacement as envoy and colleague of Lee and Franklin by John Adams. Matters were further complicated, so far as Franklin was concerned, by Lee's dislike of him; while Franklin was not quite the sort of man Adams could get on with, or even understand. Obviously, moreover, he was jealous of his great colleague and of the reputation he had in France, as well as of the attentions paid him alike by politicians and scientists, and even by Louis XVI. Franklin, however, brushed these unpleasantnesses aside and addressed himself earnestly to secure the treaty of amity and commerce with the nation, which it was one of his objects to secure, together with the monetary aid then so much wanted by the Colonies. In his interviews at Court and with the ministers, he was much assisted not only by his knowledge of French, but by the reputation that had preceded him, as a member of many important learned societies in Europe, a director of the Royal Society of London, and now by his election as one of the eight foreign members of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. The story of Franklin's mission to Versailles, as has been remarked, has hardly a parallel in the history of diplomacy. He became at once an object of greater popular interest than well-nigh any other man in France, an interest which during his eight years' sojourn in the country seemed ever on the increase. The French Academy paid him its highest honors, and he conferred distinction upon any *salon* he frequented. He moreover animated French society with a boundless enthusiasm for the cause of the

rebel-Colonists, persuaded the Government that the interests of France required her to aid them, and, finally, at a crisis in their fortunes, obtained what he sought for, a treaty of alliance in the winter of 1777-78, following upon the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga.

In these labors for the cause he had so much at heart Franklin continued unwearied, while he spent not a little of his own fortune in giving aid to American prisoners in England, and eagerly urged the despatch to America of more French ships of war and of the army that was afterwards (1780) sent out under Rochambeau. He also commended to his country's regard the gallant young Marquis de Lafayette, who had given his personal services to the cause of the Colonies. He was also instrumental in encouraging the exploits of the Scotch naval adventurer, Paul Jones, in preying upon English commerce. He had soon, moreover, the delight of seeing Spain take part with France as an ally in the conflict with England; though both nations, as John Jay was soon to discover, had each an eye on territorial gains in the New World as the price, in part, of intervention in behalf of the Colonies.

From now on to the close of the war, Franklin was indefatigable in the service he rendered to his country; and when Lord Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown had taken place he was very helpful in the negotiations for peace, along with both Jay and Adams. Though not trained in the school of diplomacy, his success alike in England and in France was the more remarkable, and shows us how much can usually be accomplished by straightforward, honest effort, and by frank and candid yet discreet speech. When

the Peace overtures were on, there was especial need for such qualities as Franklin notably possessed, and of the confidence placed in him by Count de Vergennes, the French minister, for the preliminary treaty of Peace (Nov., 1782), it will be remembered, was brought about with England directly, and without reference to either France or Spain. In spite of this fact, which France especially seemed hurt by and was inclined to resent, the final Peace treaty was passed at Paris, Sept. 3, 1783, and formally concluded the Revolutionary War, England, France, and the United States being the sole concurring and ratifying parties to the instrument.

The acceptance and passing of the Treaty were most cheering to Franklin, who now desired to return home after his long and arduous labors, especially as he felt the oncoming of age and was at this period a great sufferer from gout. In taking leave of France, he received marked courtesies from the King and his ministers, as well as from many eminent scientific men and public bodies, with whom he had had much friendly intercourse and had won from them admiration and esteem. From Louis XVI he received, as a compliment to himself on leaving France, his majesty's portrait set in diamonds; while for his country's uses he had got from France, by his own personal solicitations, loans aggregating six million dollars, besides the co-operation in the struggle for Independence of the French army and fleet. While himself accepting no salary from his country during the period of his embassy in France, the worthy and patriotic Franklin had to draw largely upon his own fortune to maintain the expenses of his post, as well as to defray the cost of hospitably entertaining his numberless

friends and many of the high officials of France. In addition to all this, he bore ungrudgingly the cares and strain of anxiety and the worries incident to holding an office of such importance abroad, embarrassed by the importunities of friends and the jealous envyings of enemies.

When Congress consented to release Franklin of his French mission and permit his return to Philadelphia he was approaching his eightieth year. He had well earned his recall, when Thomas Jefferson succeeded him. On his return to the New World, he was appointed chairman of the Municipal Council of Philadelphia, and subsequently, by an almost unanimous vote, he was elevated to the Presidency of the State. To the latter office he was twice unanimously reëlected, and was also chosen a member of the Convention that convened in 1787 to frame a Federal Constitution for the new Nation. On the roll of honored names in the Convention we meet with those of Washington, Madison, Hamilton, Dickinson, Livingston, and other patriots, who treated Franklin with distinction, and looked up to him as the Nestor of the Assembly, though he had but few gifts as an orator or public debater. During the last two years of his life Franklin helped to organize the first society formed on the American Continent for the abolition of slavery, and as its president signed the earliest remonstrance against the crying evil addressed to Congress.

This eminent man, observes the writer and well-known lecturer, Dr. John Lord, "lived to see the complete triumph of the cause to which he had devoted his public life. He lived also to see the beginning of the French Revolution, to which his writings had contributed. He lived to see the

amazing prosperity of his country when compared with its condition under royal governors. . . . Surrounded by his grandchildren and idolatrous neighbors and friends, he was a rare exception to the rule that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. He had fortune, friends, fame, and a numerous family who never disgraced his name. Of all the great actors in the stormy times in which he lived, he was one of the most fortunate. He had both genius and character, which the civilized world appreciated, and so prudent had been his early business life and his later investments, that he left a fortune of about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—a great sum to accumulate in his time. . . . A few weeks before his death he replied to a letter of President Stiles of Yale College setting forth his theological belief. Had he been more orthodox, he would have been more extolled by those men who controlled the religious opinions of his age.” Whatever were his religious beliefs, he was honest in his convictions; and in later life he was sincere and reverent enough to desire that the Convention that assembled to frame a Constitution for the United States should be opened with prayer. “Irreligious he was not, though he was as far as possible from sounding the depths of religious experience so familiar to his contemporary, Jonathan Edwards. He formulated a creed to the effect that there is a God, that men should help one another, and that evil will bring its penalties, and a code of moral rules which is really the expression of the shape which his practical experience of vice had given to Franklin’s character. Obviously, there were heights that

he could never reach; but he did not disquiet himself therefor. He had no yearnings after the unattainable."

"Politics, science, and diplomacy, turn and turn about, occupied the remainder of his career," writes the critic, Julian Hawthorne. "He pleaded his country's cause abroad; fought the malcontents, persuaded the stupid and encouraged the faint-hearted at home; was insulted, slandered, and idolized; wrote satires, protocols, addresses, and catechisms; analyzed the lightning, invented the lightning rod and the stove, and at length, on the outbreak of the Revolution, was sent as ambassador to France, whither his fame had preceded him. The value of his services to the struggling Colonies while in that position can never be wholly estimated; his sagacity, his tact, his unswerving purpose and patriotism, the unstudied dignity and charm of his manners, were only less effective than the armies of Washington in bringing the war to a fortunate close."

Franklin, who in the last two years of his life had been more or less confined to bed, died at Philadelphia in his eighty-fifth year. His death occurred April 17, 1790, amid the sincere mourning of all; and he was buried with the quiet, unostentatious honors characteristic of the Quaker community. In Paris, the great man's passing away from earth was marked by a splendid eulogism, delivered by Mirabeau in the French Assembly, while the Deputies wore mourning for three days in his honor. His writings, the most characteristic and entertaining of which is his "Autobiograph," have been edited chiefly by John Bigelow and by Jared Sparks, and to the student of the man and his career they will well repay perusal. Speaking of them,

Lord Jeffrey has said that "we look upon the life and writings of Dr. Franklin as affording a striking illustration of the incalculable value of a sound and well-directed understanding. . . . Without the slightest pretensions to the character of a scholar or a man of science, he has extended the boundary of human knowledge on a variety of subjects which scholars and men of science had previously investigated without success; and has only been found deficient in those studies which the learned have generally turned from in disdain.

"Franklin's conclusions were often rash and inaccurate, from the same circumstances which rendered his productions concise. Philosophy and speculation did not form the business of his life, nor did he dedicate himself to any particular study with the view to exhaust and complete the investigation of it in all its parts, and under all its relations. He engaged in every interesting question that suggested itself to him rather as the necessary exercise of a powerful and active mind than as a task which he had bound himself to perform. He cast a quick and penetrating eye over the facts and the data that were presented to him, and drew his conclusions with a rapidity and precision that have not often been equalled. But he did not generally stop to examine the completeness of the data upon which he proceeded, nor to consider the ultimate effect or application of the principles to which he had been conducted. In all questions, therefore, where the facts upon which he was to determine, and the materials from which his judgment was to be formed, were either few in number, or of such a nature as not to be overlooked, his reasonings are for the

most part perfectly just and conclusive, and his decisions unexceptionably sound ; but where the elements of the calculation were more numerous or widely scattered, it appears to us that he has often been precipitate, and that he has either been misled by a partial apprehension of the conditions of the problem, or has discovered only a portion of the truth that lay before him. In writings which possess such solid and unusual merit, it is of no great consequence that the fastidious eye of a critic can discover many blemishes."

THE CHARACTER OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.*

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IN these latter days, when every true patriot is pondering in his heart and wondering what the next few years may have in store for his native land, whose destiny seems to have broadened so wonderfully in the summer months just past, there is great danger that we may forget the true principles upon which our Union was founded in the beginning. There is great danger that we may lose sight of the men who were prominent in that work, and that our lives in this present may not be sufficiently influenced by the lives of these men of the past.

We are apt to view Washington as the "Father" of our country, and in a certain sense he was. We are apt to class Hamilton and Jefferson as brothers of Washington in his great work; and yet there remains one who perhaps actually did more to establish "The United States of America" than any of these three. It is the purpose of this article to recall the character of him whose name must always be intimately associated with whatever belongs most essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, and the renown of our country—Benjamin Franklin. Bancroft says: "He was the true father of the American Union. It was he who went forth to lay the foundation of that great design at Albany; and

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in New York he lifted up his voice. Here among us he appeared as the Apostle of the Union. It was Franklin who suggested the Congress of 1774; and but for his wisdom and the confidence that wisdom inspired, it is a matter of doubt whether that Congress would have taken effect. It was Franklin who suggested the bond of the Union which binds these states from Florida to Maine. Franklin was the greatest diplomatist of the eighteenth century. He never spoke a word too soon; he never spoke a word too much; he never failed to speak the right word at the right time."

Many lives of Franklin have been written, and many more may be in time to come. Sparks, Bigelow, and Morse have paid their tributes to his genius, and other historians of lesser note have painted more or less graphic pictures of one whom Americans have always delighted to honor. But may we not give closer attention to his personal character, so that we may cherish more dearly the principles which led him to accomplish so much for his country, and that we may avoid those paths which led him toward error? For while we pay deference to the great, virtuous men who have gone before, let us remember that they did not wear out virtue. As great a stake depends on our private acts to-day as followed their renowned steps. Be sure that when we as private men, "unofficial patriots," act with original and true views, the glory and lustre of our Republic will be, already is, transferred from the actions of men in high estate to those of citizens. We must have great actions; let us then, as Emerson suggests, make our own so.

Hardly any source of emotion equals the power with which great moral examples affect the mind. When vir-

ties cease to be abstractions, when they become embodied in human character and exemplified in human conduct, which everywhere adheres to the true nature of things, in which being is always substituted for seeming, we should be false to our own nature did we not indulge our gratitude and our admiration. Franklin's name was a loadstone, attracting to itself the confidence and love of a whole people and the respect of the world. Why? Because of the good he did; because—born for his country and for the world—he did not give up to selfish ends what was meant for mankind; because he acted aright and feared not the consequences; because of the power of his personal character.

Although Benjamin Franklin was what is commonly called a self-made man, he was in greater truth a God-made man, for he was born with that spark of genius in his blood which developed him into the *man* he finally became. It is this Franklin, the philosopher, the statesman, the scientist, the philanthropist, moralist, and wit, the details of whose character call for our attention.

The pervading trait of Franklin's character was his allegiance to the practical. His prime aim in everything was to benefit mankind. Alluding to his contrivance of magical squares, he says that, however wonderful these arithmetical amusements may seem, he cannot pride himself upon them, but is rather ashamed to have it known that he spent any part of his time in an employment that could "not possibly be of any use" to himself or others. The construction of fireplaces, improvements in navigation, and other subjects of practical importance, were far more interesting to him. For

the intangible aims of the metaphysician, the "airy, bubble reputation," he exhibited no concern; but the application of truth to the facts of nature and of life, the discovery of material laws and their conversion to human welfare, were problems upon which he was always engaged.

He was so indifferent to literary fame that some of his most characteristic writings were never intended for the press; very few were published under his own supervision, and nearly all came forth anonymously. His object was immediate effect. In youth he studied the art of perspicuous expression, in order to act with facility upon the minds of others; in after-years he employed the facility thus gained, not to build for himself a monument, but to enlarge the boundaries of science, and to advocate political reform.

He was probably the most popular, certainly the most prolific, author of his day. His paper was the most influential in America. "Poor Richard's" sayings were in everyone's mouth, both here and in England; and it is to the counsels therein contained that is to be attributed, in a very high degree, the formation of the public sentiment among us which makes it more honorable to be industrious than idle, and to be economical and prudent rather than extravagant and vain. The force of these sayings has not yet died out, but is really on the increase, for to-day his famous "Almanac," the first and perhaps the greatest of American classics, has been re-edited, and thus reappears with renewed life. It is to be hoped that his words may take root in our hearts and live within us. Seldom has an author directly accomplished so much material good by his writings. Nearly all the schemes for the general welfare which he put for-

ward were brought forcibly before, and their necessity was made plain to, the public mind, by short cogent articles from his pen. His writings embrace the whole circle of questions important to his country and his age,—morals, the economy of life, commerce, finance, science, history, and politics.

Of his language we need but say that it is pure and English. "The style of his letters, in general," says Lord Jeffrey, "is excellent. They are chiefly remarkable for great simplicity of language, admirable good sense and ingenuity, and an amiable and inoffensive cheerfulness that is never overclouded or eclipsed." Of his philosophical writings, Sir Humphry Davy says: "A singular felicity of induction guided all his researches, and by very small means he established very grand truths. The style and manner of his publication on Electricity are almost as worthy of admiration as the doctrine it contains. He has endeavored to remove all mystery and obscurity from the subject. He has written alike for the uninitiated and for the philosopher; and he has rendered his details amusing as well as perspicuous, elegant as well as simple. Science appears in his language in a dress wonderfully decorous, the best adapted to display her native loveliness." The peculiar charm of his writings, and his great merit also in action, consisted in the clearness with which he saw his object, and the bold and steady pursuit of it, by the surest and shortest road. It is not to be supposed, however, that his writings are devoid of ornament, and even amusement. The latter abounds; only nothing is sacrificed to either. On the contrary, they come most naturally into place, and uniformly help on the purpose in

hand, of which neither the writer nor the reader ever loses sight for an instant.

Franklin was one of the most remarkable men certainly of our times as a statesman, or of any age as a philosopher. He also stands alone in combining these two characters, the greatest that man can sustain; combining them in this, that having borne the first part in enlarging science by one of the greatest discoveries ever made, he bore the second part in founding one of the greatest nations of the world.

Franklin never allowed personal matters to deter him from doing what he thought right in any of his public affairs. On the 12th of March, 1781, being then in his seventy-sixth year, he wrote to the President of Congress, requesting his recall as minister to France. "I do not know," writes he, "that my mental faculties are impaired; perhaps I shall be the last to discover that; but I am sensible of great diminution in my activity, a quality I think particularly necessary in your minister for this court." But to Franklin's application for a release, Congress replied by appointing him one of a commission of five to negotiate a treaty of peace. Finding his health "considerably reëstablished," Franklin accepted the new appointment; and it was he who was most influential in obtaining from England an acknowledgment of the complete independence of the United States.

Franklin never let himself do a thing half-way. He had obtained large loans from the French people. He did not let the matter rest there, but soon arranged highly favorable terms for the payment of our debt to France. In writing to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress, he says: "Britain will be long watching for advantages, to recover

what she has lost. If we do not convince the world that we are a nation to be depended on in our treaties,—if we appear negligent in paying our debts and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us,—our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of securing, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success.”

At length, to Franklin's repeated applications for recall,—applications which had long been unheeded, because Congress was well aware of his profound skill in diplomacy, his influence, and his patriotic devotion,—a substitute at the French court was, in March, 1785, appointed in Thomas Jefferson. “You have come to fill Dr. Franklin's place?” some one asked. “Oh, no, sir,” replied Jefferson, “No living man can do that; but I am appointed to succeed him.”

While official duty and patriotism gave Franklin occasion to accomplish so many useful and requisite undertakings, there was another sphere of mental activity in which he wrought with kindred success. When he was not required to convert conviction into action, and to deal with great crises in the political world, he turned with readiness to that of natural philosophy. This was his congenial element. “I have got my niche,” he writes exultantly, “after having been kept out of it for twenty-four years by foreign appointments.”

Scarcely emerged from infancy, Franklin was a philosopher without being conscious of it, and by the continued exercise of his genius he prepared himself for those discoveries in science which have since associated his name with

the modern developments in electricity, and for those political reflections which have placed him by the side of Solon and Lycurgus. He was by instinct a philosopher.

Even here he exhibited that practical nature which, as has been said, was such a distinguishing feature of his character. The philosopher, delighting in speculation, was also eminently a man of action. He realized that conviction, be it never so excellent, is worthless till it is converted into conduct. Observation led him to discovery, and inference to a practical application of it. Was he traversing the ocean, he made experiments upon the temperature of the waters, and proved that the warmth of the water in the Gulf Stream was much greater than that of the water on each side of it. He thus revealed to mariners a simple mode of telling when they were in the Gulf Stream. Did he chance to examine the loss of heat through the aperture of chimneys, and the perfect combustion in a closed stove, he invented from this double examination, by combining both means of heating, a chimney-place which was as economical as a stove, and a stove which was as open as a chimney-place.

Of all this great man's scientific excellences, the most remarkable is the smallness, the apparent inadequacy, of the means he employed in his experiments. His discoveries were made with hardly any apparatus at all. The experiments by which the identity of lightning and electricity was demonstrated, were made with a sheet of brown paper, a bit of twine, a silk thread, and an iron key. Other examples might be quoted, but in all he seems to have had the faculty of forming great helps out of comparative trifles.

So it was that a remarkable simplicity, a strict economy

of the means employed, was always to be seen in his operations. Here we find the impress of youthful environments upon his character. For it seems that the frugality with which he was, from narrow circumstances in early life, obliged habitually to conduct himself, sharpened his ingenuity in all respects, and taught him how far industry and contrivance could save any additional expenditures of money, time, or energy. His whole course, both in action and in speculation, was simple and plain, always preferring the easiest and shortest road.

If we compare the life of Franklin, as a whole, with that of other renowned philosophers, we find that the isolated self-devotion, the egotism and vanity, that too often detract from the interest and dignity of their characters as men, do not mar the unity of the tranquil and benign disposition which lends a graceful charm to this American philosopher. Archimedes invented machines of war to overthrow the invaders of his country; but his heart did not warm like Franklin's, nor did his brain work to devise the means of elevating his poor and ignorant fellow-citizens in the scale of knowledge and self-government. Newton proclaimed vast and universal laws; but there was in his temper a morbid tenacity of personal fame, beside which the disinterested zeal of Franklin is beautiful. While the French philosophers spoke eloquently to a learned Academy, this American philosopher had a nation for his audience, and disseminated among them truths vital to their progress and happiness.

The Frenchman's American is Benjamin Franklin. It was so when they first began to know him, when he went in

and out among them a living man, and it is so to-day, when more than a century has closed around his simple tomb. It is said that the characteristic in Franklin which made him an idol among the French, was his *versatility*. Sure it is that, next to his practical nature, his versatility was the most prominent of his characteristics. He was the adroit diplomat and the simple bourgeois, the learned philosopher and scientist, and the gay *bon vivant* and *bon homme*. He could write a dispatch or an epigram with equal facility, and he could control the electric fluid and a smoky chimney with equal success. He, in turn, could be a grave philosopher, or a genial companion; a man of pleasure, or the representative of the infant republic; the statesman or the humorist,—active, alert, inventive, wise, cheerful, independent, but in whatever sphere of life he appeared, he was the same peerless Franklin. At all times, and in everything he undertook, the vigor of an understanding, at once original and practical, was distinctly perceptible.

It seems almost unnecessary to make special mention of Franklin's industry. For what man could have accomplished as much, had he not been industrious,—intensely industrious? In the midst of his great occupations as a diplomatist for the liberty of his country, he had some physical experiment near him in his closet, and the sciences, which he had rather discovered than studied, afforded him a constant source of employment during hours spared from his official duties. Parallel with his devotion to scientific inquiry was a ceaseless activity for the public good, which we have already noticed. As a public-spirited man, he undertook various and responsible occupations, alone enough

to furnish the materials of a noble and useful life, and yet constituting but a single phase of the illustrious career of Franklin. Moreover, the industry which in youth he displayed in seeking knowledge remained with him to the last. He acquired proficiency in the French language after sixty. He could not watch a shooting star, glance at a metallic crystal, feel the impulse of the tide or the greeting of the wind, examine a proposed law of state or a vegetable product of the earth, without striving after the origin of effects, and to infer a law applicable to the needs of his race.

Upon the integrity of this great man, whether in public or in private life, there rests no stain. Strictly honest, and even scrupulously punctual in all his dealings, he preserved in the highest fortune that regularity which he had practiced as well as preached in the lowest. When Franklin, upon his second mission to England, presented the petition to the king, it was transferred to Parliament, by which body it was contemptuously rejected. This left affairs in general confusion. Several negotiations were set on foot by friends of the ministry to secure the good offices of Franklin, to bring about a settlement with the Colonies; and overtures were made to him, in the hope of finding some accessible point on the side of his self-interest, where a breach could be effected, through which ministerial favors might be obtained. In the conversations between him and Mr. Barclay, the latter hinted that from Franklin's coöperation in promoting such a settlement, he might expect "not only the restoration of his old place, but almost any other he could wish for"; upon which Franklin, writing to his son, remarks: "I need not tell you, who know me so well,

how improper and disgusting this language was to me." To Mr. Barclay, he replied: "The ministry, I am sure, would rather give me a place in a cart to Tyburn* than any other place whatever."

Without doubt, Benjamin Franklin was a strong man,—a man of strong and positive character, whose friends and enemies were equally strong in their feelings of like and dislike. The men who were ranged as his enemies have been relegated to a second place on the page of history, while those who were his friends stand out boldly in the front rank of the notable characters of the past.

Before departing for England on his second mission, namely, that of seeking a change in the colonial government in order to check the usurpation of the Proprietaries, he wrote some remarks in reply to the "Protest" they had made against his appointment as the Assembly's agent. The opposition to him had come from men with whom he had long been associated in public and private life. He felt the estrangement deeply. They were men "the very ashes of whose former friendship," he said, he "revered." "I am now," he remarked in conclusion, "to take leave, perhaps a last leave, of the country I love, and in which I have spent the greatest part of my life. 'Esto Perpetua!' I wish every kind of prosperity to my friends, and I forgive my enemies."

There is one most important thing to be remarked concerning his enemies. It is best set forth in his own words. In writing to John Jay, he says: "I have, as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an

*A place of execution, near what is now the Marble Arch, in Hyde Park, London.

American; I have also two or three in America, who are my enemies as a *minister*; but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man*; for by His grace, through a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, 'Ben Franklin has wronged me.' This, my friend, is, in old age, a comfortable reflection." The Proprietaries appear to have found in him a steady and vigilant antagonist. But, notwithstanding Franklin's opposition to their usurpations, they were forced to admit that his course was fair and unexceptional. "I do not find," writes Thomas Penn, "that he has done me any prejudice with any party."

After all, it is only a man whose character we have been considering; and if he had no blemishes, he would scarcely be human. The spirit of calculation, the narrowness of a matter-of-fact vision, the absence of that generous and ardent mood which seems inseparable from the most aspiring natures, sometimes render Franklin too exclusively a utilitarian and a creature of the present, to satisfy our loftiest ideal of character. Moreover, something more than gossip has bequeathed hints of amours that detract greatly from the gravity of the sage; and there are those who find in the doctrine and practice of the American philosopher an undue estimate of thrift, and an illustration that "man lives by bread alone," which chills enthusiasm and subdues praise.

It remains to speak of one other blemish; and to those who believe that in Jesus Christ alone there is remission of sins, and acceptance with the Father,—to those who believe that a man is just as great as he is in the sight of God, no greater, it appears as the greatest blemish of them all;

namely, that Franklin was not a Christian. It must be confessed that the spiritual was not developed in Franklin's nature in proportion to the scientific element, and, as a consequence, religion was a grand social interest rather than a matter of profession or of sentiment. Here again we see another impress of youthful surroundings upon his character; but this time it is unfavorable. For it is probable that an early familiarity with the conflicts of sects confirmed his aversion to merely doctrinal faith. Even in his religious views, Franklin seems to have been biassed by his habitual regard for utility as the primary good. Finding, at an early period of his experience, that men destitute of religious convictions were unreliable and sensual, he came to consider morality as essential to social and individual well-being, and religion as essential to morality. But there is ample evidence that he recognized those broad and eternal truths which lie at the basis of all religion. In writing to President Stiles, of Yale College, he says: "Here is my creed; I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire,—I have, with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity, though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and I think it needless to busy myself about it now, when I expect soon (he was then eighty-five) an opportunity of knowing the truth with less,

trouble." Had the philosopher's wisdom not failed him here, Franklin would not thus have come short of the highest glory, and we could justly say: He was a truly great man, even in the sight of God who reigneth.

It is not in his faults that we wish to take a last look at this notable man of the past, but rather in the good points of his character. When we contemplate the amount of enduring good he did, the value of his scientific discoveries, the self-devotion of the man, the loyal activity of the patriot, the interests he promoted, the truths he made vital, and the prosperity he initiated, our sense of obligation, our admiration of his practical wisdom, merge critical objection into honor and gratitude. What is the flippant sarcasm of the queer Madame du Barry, that he ate asparagus like a savage, to the intellectual Hume's assertion, "America has sent us many good things,—silver, sugar, tobacco, indigo, etc.,—but you are the first philosopher." If the graphic pen of Mrs. Grant, in depicting the candid graces of colonial life in America, attributes the subsequent devotion to gain to the economical maxims of Franklin, the sacred opinion of Washington affords a more just view of the rank their author held in the hearts of his countrymen: "If to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talent, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy, can satisfy the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know that you have not lived in vain."

FIRST FRANKLIN PRIZE ESSAY.*

STANDING almost at the close,—yea, in the very twilight of the nineteenth century,—it is delightful to turn our gaze backward and review the events, and study the character of those illustrious men to whose labors the world and civilization owe so much. And it is especially edifying to every American to linger long and reverently over the sacred memory of those scholars, statesmen, and patriots whose self-sacrificing devotion to liberty made it possible to construct out of a pathless wilderness a nation which is to-day the wonder and marvel of the world.

Along with Washington and Lincoln, there stands a patriot, the most remarkable, in many respects, of any American character,—Benjamin Franklin, who was born in Boston, in the colony of Massachusetts, January 17, 1706, where he lived with his parents during his childhood, going to school a portion of the time, and assisting his father, who was engaged in the business of a soap-boiler and tallow-chandler. At the age of 12 years he was apprenticed to his brother James, who had just established a printing-house, and who, a short time afterward, started a newspaper, the fourth to be established on this side of the Atlantic. Here he remained for five years. But at the age of 17 his relations with his brother and employer becoming unen-

*By Permission from "*Self-Culture*" Magazine, April, 1896—Courtesy of The Werner Co., Publishers, Akron, O.

durable, he severed his apprenticeship, and, with the proceeds of the sale of some of his books, journeyed to Philadelphia, in the colony of Pennsylvania, where he remained, with the exception of his trips abroad, to the day of his death, sixty-seven years later. The people of Philadelphia little dreamed that the lad, who, on that cold October morning, walked their streets a stranger in a strange land, with but a few shillings in his pocket, was destined to become the greatest philanthropist, diplomatist, philosopher, journalist, statesman, patriot, and by far the greatest genius of his time.

After reaching his destination, he was not long in obtaining employment in the printing business, where his superior abilities and seemingly inexhaustible supply of resources soon began to attract public notice. In less than a year he had made many valuable acquaintances, and, under promises of financial assistance from Sir William Keith, then governor of Pennsylvania, he was induced to go to England for the purpose of buying a printing outfit, but upon arriving in London, he found himself penniless by the duplicity of Keith. He remained in England for two years, and then sailed for Philadelphia, where, during the course of the next year, he set up a printing establishment on his own account. He also, about this time, purchased a newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. This was the real beginning of that long career of indefatigable labor, which resulted in many of the most brilliant triumphs of philosophy and diplomacy the world has ever seen, and that has made the name of Franklin the magical watchword of every schoolboy in America.

For the next seventeen years he was at the head of journalism in this country, and became widely known, both from the lucidness and scope of his articles. He was also identified with many public enterprises in Philadelphia. The first circulating library in the new world took shape and form under his management. It was Franklin who organized the first fire and police force in Philadelphia. And it was to him that Pennsylvania was indebted for the establishment of her splendid university and her American Philosophical Society. It was Franklin who brought into existence the military organizations of the state, and it was to the energy which he imparted to every project that Philadelphia owed her most substantial improvements.

Though he devoted much of his time to business and public affairs, yet, by systematic and diligent study, he found plenty of time for *self-culture*. In a remarkably short time he became master of the Italian, Spanish, French, and Latin languages. But it was his investigations in the fields of science, and, especially, natural philosophy, that made his name immortal. He made many valuable discoveries in electricity, chief among them being the demonstration that electricity and lightning are one and the same. The Royal Society of London, when the result of these discoveries was laid before it, refused to credit them, and rejected with scorn the proposition to print them in their transactions. The day, however, soon came when that same august body was forced to acknowledge that it had erred; but not until a London printer and bookseller had made a fortune out of their publication and sale in book form. The Royal Society subsequently conferred many honors and tokens of

respect and appreciation upon him. He was also honored with the Copley medal, and received honorary degrees from Yale and Harvard colleges, on this side of the Atlantic, and from the leading universities of Europe.

But philosophy alone could not wholly engross his talents. The country that gave him birth and that he loved so well was fast approaching a crisis, and it demanded a portion of his energies. War between Great Britain and France was impending, and Franklin was sent as the representative of Pennsylvania to a congress of commissioners called by the Lords of Trade, to meet in Albany, to devise means for a defense of the colonies, and he there submitted a most excellent plan for a system of colonial defense by a union of the colonies, but which was rejected by the Lords of Trade because they saw in it a danger more potent than any they might have occasion to fear from France. They knew that such a measure would show the colonies their strength, and they were fearful of the consequences of such a revelation. Instead of this salutary measure England sent out an army of British soldiers to defend the colonies, and expected them to support it. But the Penn brothers, the hereditary governors of Pennsylvania, refused to allow any act for raising revenues to pass, unless their lands were exempt from taxation. This led to a petition to the king, and Franklin was sent to England to present it. The king refused to interfere; and he then turned his attention to the Penn brothers, but they gave him less encouragement, if possible, than the king. He remained in England for five years, and by his voice and pen, endeavored to bring the mother country to a just appreciation of her colonies, but it

seemed to no purpose, for the clouds were gathering thick and dark, and the day for a final dissolution of the ties between the two countries was fast approaching.

In 1762 he again sailed for home, and immediately upon his arrival began taking an active interest in all colonial affairs. He entered the race for the seat in the assembly which he had held for fourteen consecutive years, but was defeated by a small majority. But this seeming defeat was one of the most signal victories of his life; for, the assembly no sooner met than they again sent him to England in charge of another petition to the crown. It was during this trip to England that the "Stamp Act" was passed. It, however, did not long remain in force, for the very next session of parliament repealed the obnoxious law, almost before it went into effect. During this session Franklin was examined before the bar of the House of Commons upon the effects of the stamp act and other legislation having for their object the taxation of the colonies. This examination, if it did no more, brought parliament and the ministry to a realization of the fact that in Franklin they had a foe worthy of their steel, and the colonies a champion equal to every exigency. It also restored Franklin to the confidence and esteem of the colonies and raised him to the rank of the foremost statesman of America.

Franklin remained in England for the next ten years, during which time he did everything that a statesman and diplomatist could to reconcile the interests of the colonies with the mother country. As the representative of four of the most important colonies, he worked for the accomplishment of this end; and to it he brought all the power of his

matchless genius, his ripe experience in diplomatic matters, and his social influence, which has, perhaps, never been equaled by any American at the English Court, but without avail. And when he sailed for home it was with a firm conviction that but one recourse was left for the colonies—war! Nor were his suspicions without foundation; for, upon his arrival at Philadelphia, he found freedom's soil baptized in the sacred blood of his fellow-countrymen. The battles of Concord and Lexington had lit the lamp of freedom, and nothing but independence would satisfy the colonies. And it was to the stupendous task of freeing the colonies from the galling yoke of British oppression that Franklin now set himself with all the energy of his being. He had no sooner landed than he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress then sitting in Philadelphia. He conceived the grand idea of appealing to France, England's bitterest enemy, for aid; and he wrote the instructions of Silas Dean, the man selected to convey it. He was one of the commissioners sent to Canada to persuade them to join the revolution, but they refused to do so; he was appointed a member of the committee of safety and participated in their laborious duties; he drafted and presented to Congress a plan of confederation very much resembling our present constitution; he filled the difficult office of post-master-general of the colonies; he served on a secret committee for procuring supplies and munitions of war; he was also one of a committee appointed to confer with Washington in regard to the organization and discipline of the army; in fact, he was identified with almost every important measure during the earlier period of the Revolution.

The subject of independence was now absorbing the public attention, and Franklin was one of its foremost and strongest advocates. He was a member of the convention that adopted the Declaration of Independence, and was one of the committee appointed with John Adams, Roger Sherman, Phillip Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson to draft the famous instrument. During the signing of the document John Hancock, when his turn came to sign, said: "We must be unanimous, there must be no pulling different ways; we must all hang together." "Yes," said Franklin, "we must, indeed, all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately."

If there was one trait in Franklin's character more remarkable than any other it was his intense patriotism and love of country. There was nothing he would not sacrifice, not even the strongest personal friendship, to support the cause of freedom. This is well illustrated by the following letter to Mr. Strahan, who had been one of his dearest friends:

Philada., July 5th, 1775.

"Mr. Strahan:—

"You are a member of parliament, and one of that majority, which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands! They are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am

"Yours,

"B. FRANKLIN."

The colonies had now received most encouraging news

from France, and Franklin, with John Adams and Arthur Lee, were appointed to go to France and solicit aid for the Revolution. How well they succeeded in this mission history has abundantly shown. Notwithstanding France was at war and almost a bankrupt, they succeeded in procuring above 26,000,000 francs. And this, beyond a peradventure, was due to the genius and diplomacy of Franklin.

Aside from the high political position he held, he was, socially, the most prominent and popular man in all Europe. He was a member of all the learned and scientific societies in the world, including the Royal Society and the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris. His works had been translated and printed in several different languages, and were accepted as undisputed authority on all the varied subjects treated. He remained in Paris until 1785, and during this time he rendered many valuable services to the cause of freedom. He signed all the treaties with France and also the definitive treaty with Great Britain, wherein she acknowledged the United Colonies as a free and independent nation. He also devoted much of his time and attention to science and literature, being the author of many of the most remarkable pamphlets, essays, and state papers of the eighteenth century.

Upon his arrival in Philadelphia after his long absence he was elected president of the colony of Pennsylvania, and in this important office he served for three consecutive terms. He was one of the Pennsylvania delegates to the constitutional convention which met in May, 1787, and over which the immortal Washington presided. And it was due to the influence of Franklin more than to any other person, save

Washington, that that convention gave to the world the grandest document ever conceived by the mind of mortal man.

But it would be impossible to even mention a hundredth part of his vast and varied labors, or to enumerate his official titles and the honors bestowed upon him by a nation, grateful for the splendid services rendered her, or by a world that loved and respected him as no other man has ever been loved and respected. He was born in the humblest surroundings, nurtured in nature's lap, educated in nature's school alone; without any of those advantages which the modern world deems essential to a liberal education, he rose by gradual steps and by his own energies to be the most brilliant and famous man of his time. His industry, frugality, and indomitable will, coupled with his daring genius, amply prepared him to scale those lofty heights which but few ever reach and fewer still maintain with that happy dignity which characterized him through the whole of his long and eventful life.

Whether dipping tallow candles, setting type in a country printing-office, drawing the lightning from heaven to obey the will of man, negotiating with the mightiest monarchs of the world, or, as the welcome guest at the feast of a king, he was still the same true, noble, dignified man, an honor to himself and a credit to his country. Illustrious men surrounded him for more than half a century; princes and statesmen were his companions, kings and emperors paid him homage; yet, when their names shall have been forgotten,

"When their memories disappear
In the cycle sweep of years,"

still will every school-boy bless, every statesman praise,
the name that will stand forth upon the inky blackness of the
past in shining, burning characters, the name of Benjamin
Franklin.

MOSES HOPKINS, JR. (*Non de plume.*)

[J. A. BECK, S. Omaha, Neb.]

SECOND FRANKLIN PRIZE ESSAY.*

BORN in the infancy of the American colonies, his cradle rocked by poverty; reared in the stirring times that fired the blood of the most craven; coming to manhood when thoughts of freedom and independence were first born; reaching his zenith in the birth of our free land; his soul passing to its Maker in the dying days of the century made doubly famous by his having lived—such is the life of Benjamin Franklin.

With the exception of Washington, whom in many respects he much resembled, this country ranks among her dead nowhere so great a man. History presents few examples of a career starting from such humble beginnings and attaining to such great and enduring splendor. Compared with his, the life and deeds of a Napoleon seem vulgar and trivial. He touched life at innumerable points, and, like Midas, turned the dull lead of prosaic environments into the pure gold of utility and knowledge. In range he was at once philosopher, moralist, statesman, diplomatist, and wit, and by the quaint charm of his well-nigh faultless style, vivid, simple, powerful, stands among the classic writers of English prose. In literature his range is unequaled by Coleridge, who was so opulent and suggestive; in philosophy, Goethe was not wiser, Bacon not more orig-

*From "*Self-Culture*" Magazine, for April, 1896, by permission of The Werner Co., Publishers, Akron, O.

inative; in diplomacy he united the genius of Macchiavelli with the conservatism of Metternich and the versatility of Gladstone.

Born in a humble home in Boston, January 17, 1706; dying in 1790, he lived, measured by days, far beyond the allotted three-score years and ten, but in fame and power his life is eternal. Poverty denied him a scholastic education, but God endowed him with a power of industry and a capacity for learning. Instead of reading books he wrote them; in lieu of a school he studied the world and pored, year after year, over the pages of that greatest of all books—the Book of Mankind. At 22 he had had two years' schooling, no more; at 40 he was master of many languages; at 60 the greatest universities and whole nations agreed in calling him the greatest philosopher then living; at 80 his diplomacy was the international wonder, his tact the peacemaker of warring worlds; his death crowned him with universal love, the true object of all living.

His appetite for knowledge was insatiable, his acquisitions were immense. He gathered up facts insensibly, and retained everything that he observed or read. Whatsoever things are just and pure, these he supported. He possessed at once a wide and keen interest in human affairs; he was a man of the world. To enumerate, without comment, the deeds of his life would fill a volume; page after page might be filled with his character; our country is a monument to his influence.

As a statesman his career began as clerk of the general assembly at the age of 33 years; he continued in public affairs till within six months of his death and in public service till

within twenty-four days of it. Emissary to Great Britain in times of discontent, advocating the cause of justice, equality and representation before the bigoted ministers of the king; one of the authors of the Declaration of Independence, that battle-hymn of the new world; delegate to the constitutional convention; minister plenipotentiary to the court of France, where his personality influenced them in behalf of his warring country; by his extraordinary shrewdness, dexterity, patience, moderation, and silence, he at last set the seal of triumph on the act of the American people.

As a patriot none surpassed him; so long as he would accept office no other candidate was thought of; all his long life he served the people, for his ambition was to be of practical use to the multitude of men; the chief motive of his life was to promote the welfare of mankind.

Innumerable pictures might be painted from the dramatic scenes of his life. Now he is flying a kite suspended by a silken string, to which hangs an iron key. He touches the key. The lightning of heaven sparkles in his hand; the mystery is solved. The lightning of the heavens and the electricity of the chemist's shop are the same thing, different only in quantity. Electricity is reduced to order; the "Prometheus of modern times" has snatched the thunderbolt from heaven; has subdued the terror of the skies. The greatest discovery of the century is made; the parent of many more not dreamed of then or yet.

Again he is standing before the bar of the house of the mother country, a master examined by his scholars, pleading his country's wrongs, testifying to their abuses. His answers ring loud and clear; they are heard on both sides the

Atlantic; his voice still resounds, and the echo is the cry of freedom. The light thrown upon colonial affairs by his examination determined parliament to repeal the odious stamp act, a triumph which doubly endeared him to his countrymen.

When his hair is whitened by an age that conquers most men, he is sitting in a little room, around him are four other giants of the brain, the nation is in its infancy; he who has conquered the lightning of the skies is wresting the scepter from the tyrant. Long has he sought a union between the colonies, now he seeks independence. He is moulding eternal principles and self-evident truths to form a nation whose foundation is on the natural law that all governments shall uphold the rights of all men and not the principles of a favored few.

Franklin, at Paris, is negotiating the treaty of peace between America and Great Britain. The work is accomplished; what was a declaration is an established fact. War has done its duty, peace must begin its mission; the sword is beaten into the pruning-hook; America is born, springing phoenix-like from the flames of awful war.

The last picture of the series. An old man is making ready to die. He has been a cheerful optimist all his long life, and few men have so trusted human kind as he has. There lack but a few days of the allotted term when that rare intellect will be smothered forever, and that broad philanthropy will cease from the toil in which it has never tired, either for the free or the oppressed. His first act in the city of Philadelphia had been to give bread to a starving woman, his last is to sign the first petition for the abolition of slavery

in the land. The great philosopher, the great statesman, he has done with philosophy and state craft. not yet ended is his philanthropy. A man of greater humanity never lived, and, like Abou Ben Adhem, his name is written as one who loved his fellow-men.

The fruits of his genius are many-hued; they grow now in all parts of the globe. His talents flowed in many channels, but these united in the river of service to humanity. He founded the first social library of America, edited the first magazine, introduced street pavements, invented a system of room warming, indited scores of pamphlets, edited many papers, developed the feasibility of stilling troubled waters by the application of oil, taught men to protect buildings from lightning, founded the first scientific association on this continent, organized the first fire company.

He was the embodiment of practical wisdom; his ceaseless industry throughout his long life was guided to an extraordinary degree by the clear light of reason, and inspired by a warm and enthusiastic desire for the improvement of mankind.

Intellectually few men are Franklin's peer in any age or nation. He was one of the most distinguished scientists who have ever lived. A born teacher of men, he had great fondness for organizing into associations, and a singular aptitude for creating, conducting and perpetuating such bodies. His great, well-trained mind worked with the ease and force of a perfectly regulated machine whose smoothness of action almost conceals its power.

The Almanac of Poor Richard, with its "proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as

the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue," prove him to be among the most distinguished moralists who have ever lived, for he taught humanity a doctrine rooted more in common sense than in blind faith. Distinguished no less by practical benevolence than by an almost intuitive appreciation of the wants and character of early American society and morals, he taught and preached in the days when the sayings of Poor Richard were the proverbs of the land. The man has died and disappeared, but his thoughts and acts survive, leaving an indelible stamp upon his country and the world. Thus the spirit of his life is prolonged and perpetuated, moulding the thought and will, and thereby contributing to form the character of future generations.

It has often been said that he had no religion. His was the essence of all creeds, for he taught, and by his life exemplified the dignity of manual labor, the worth of that true education which is "to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love knowledge; not merely pure, but to love purity; not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice."

He taught that "holiness is an infinite compassion for others; that greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them, that happiness is a great love and much serving."

When his summons came to "join the innumerable caravan which moves to that mysterious realm," he encountered this last solemn conflict with the same philosophical tranquillity and pious resignation to the will of heaven which had

distinguished him through all the various events of his life. And those dying words of Webster might have been uttered as truly by Franklin, in clarion tones that all posterity might hear,—“I still live,” for his fame shines on undimmed in the memory of the eminent services of this man, who is indeed the great glory of our continent.

“XERXES.”

[F. G. MOORHEAD, Keokuk, Iowa.]



ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF FRANKLIN.

FRANKLIN WITHOUT PERSONAL ENEMIES, HIMSELF EVERY MAN'S FRIEND.

In the year 1784, Benjamin Franklin, then seventy-eight years old, while United States Minister to France, wrote to his distinguished friend, John Jay, thus:

"I have, as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an American. I have also two or three in America who are my enemies as a *minister*, but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man*, for by His grace, through a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, 'Benjamin Franklin has wronged me.' This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection."

FRANKLIN'S SAGACITY AND WISDOM.

Franklin's practical sagacity and wisdom are shown in the following incidents:

In the legislature of Pennsylvania Franklin found great difficulty in carrying out the necessary measures for military defense, because a majority of the members were Quakers, who, though friendly to the success of the Revolution, refused to vote the supplies of war.

So Franklin caused them to vote appropriations to buy bread, flour, wheat, *or other grain*. The governor said, "I will take the money, for I understand their meaning, —*other grain* is gunpowder."

Franklin afterward moved the purchase of a fire-engine, saying to a friend, "Nominate me on the committee, and I will nominate you, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a fire-engine. The Quakers can have no objection to that." Matthew Arnold, in his address on Emerson in this country, said that he considered Benjamin Franklin the greatest of all Americans.

THE SILVER HOOK.

The following incident contains a good hint to men who are not blacksmiths; a hint to such as have learned useful trades, but have not learned what is infinitely more valuable; that divine philanthropy which alone can make their trades their delight, and thus strew life over with roses:

Dr. Franklin observing one day a hearty young fellow, whom he knew to be an extraordinary blacksmith, sitting on the wharf, bobbing for little mud-cats and eels; he called to him.

"Ah, Tom, what a pity 'tis you don't fish with a silver hook."

The young man replied, "I am not able to fish with a silver hook."

Some days after this the doctor, passing that way, saw Tom out at the end of the wharf again, with his long pole bending over the flood.

"What, Tom," cried the doctor, "have you not got the silver hook yet?"

"God bless you, doctor," cried the blacksmith, "I'm hardly able to fish with an iron hook."

"Poh! poh!" replied the doctor, "go home to your anvil; and you'll make silver enough in one day to buy more and better fish than you would catch here in a month."

FRANKLIN AND THE GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

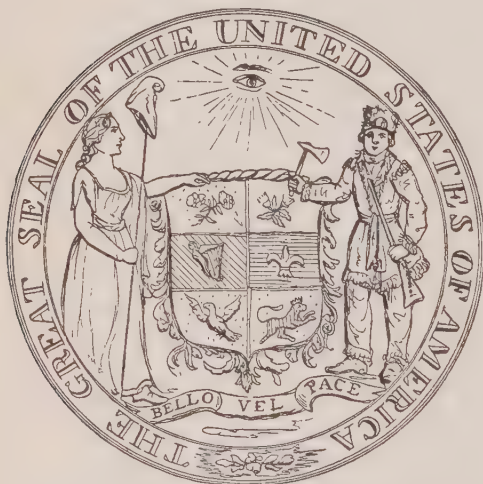
The final vote on declaring the colonies of the United States free and independent was taken July 4, 1776, at two in the afternoon. About four hours later a committee consisting of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, were appointed to prepare a Great Seal for the new republic. On the ninth of July, 1776, the committee met in the London Coffee House, which still stands on the southwest corner of Front and Market Streets, Philadelphia.

Several designs were submitted at this and subsequent meetings by Du Simitiere and Jefferson, with suggestions by Adams and Franklin. The one proposed by Du Simitiere had the arms of the several nations from whence America had been peopled, as English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, German, etc., each in a shield.

On one side of them he placed Liberty with her cap; on the other a rifleman in his uniform, with his rifle in one hand, and a tomahawk in the other, that dress and weapons being peculiar to America.

Dr. Franklin proposed for the device, Moses lifting his wand and dividing the Red Sea, and the chariot of Pharaoh, and his host overwhelmed with the waters.

For a motto, he suggested the words of Cromwell, "REBELLION TO TYRANTS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD."



Du Simitiere's Design for Seal of the United States.

Nothing came of the action of this committee. Later on other committees were appointed and other designs submitted. At last Congress in June, 1782, adopted the present Seal of the United States.

The design of this Seal was sent by John Adams from England to Charles Thomson, the Secretary of Congress, to whom the whole matter had been referred.

It is very interesting to note that a British aristocrat gave us the design. For it was furnished by Sir John Prestwich, a baronet of the west of England, who was a fast friend of the Americans during the Revolutionary war, and an accomplished antiquarian.

TRUE INDEPENDENCE.

This anecdote contains much that is suggestive to the modern press.

Soon after his establishment in Philadelphia, Franklin was offered a piece for publication in his newspaper. Being very busy, he begged the gentleman would leave it for consideration. The next day the author called and asked his opinion of it.

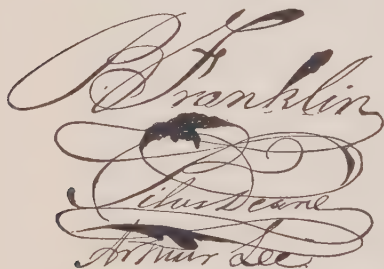
"Why, sir," replied Franklin, "I am sorry to say that I think it highly scurrilous and defamatory. But being at a loss on account of my poverty whether to reject it or not, I thought I would put it to this issue—at night, when my work was done, I bought a twopenny loaf, on which, with a mug of cold water, I supped heartily, and then wrapping myself in my greatcoat, slept very soundly on the floor till morning, when another loaf and a mug of water afforded me a pleasant breakfast. Now, sir, since I can live very comfortably in this manner, why should I prostitute my press to personal hatred or passion, for a more luxurious living?"

One cannot read this anecdote of our American sage without thinking of Socrates' reply to King Archilaus, who had pressed him to give up preaching in the dirty street of Athens, and come and live with him in his splendid courts. "Meal, please your majesty, is a halfpenny a peck at Athens, and water I can get for nothing."

FRANKLIN AND THE WIG.

Nothing can better illustrate the spirit which Dr. Franklin carried with him to the court of Louis XVI, and the

spirit he found there than this story: On Dr. Franklin's arrival at Paris, as Plenipotentiary from the United States, the king expressed a wish to see him immediately. As there was no going to the court of France in those days without permission of the wigmaker, a wig-



Signatures of the Commissioners to
France.

maker, of course, was sent for. In an instant a richly dressed Monsieur, his arms folded in a prodigious muff of furs, and a long sword by his side, made his appearance. It was the king's wigmaker, with his servant in livery, a

long sword by his side, too, and a load of sweet-scented bandboxes, full of "de wig," as he said, "de superb wig for de great Docteer Frankline."

One of the wigs was tried on—a world too small! Bandbox after bandbox was tried; but all with the same ill success! The wigmaker fell into the most violent rage, to the extreme mortification of Dr. Franklin that a gentleman so bedecked with silks and perfumes should, notwithstanding, be such a child.

Presently, however, as in all the transports of a grand discovery, the wigmaker cried out to Dr. Franklin, that he had just found out where the fault lay—"not in his wig as too small; Oh, no! his wig was not too small; but de docteurs head too big; great deal too big." Franklin, smiling, replied, that the fault could hardly lie there; for

his head was made by the Almighty himself, who was not likely to err. Upon this the wigmaker took in a little; but still contended that there must be something the matter with Dr. Franklin's head.

It was at any rate, he said, out of the fashion.

He begged Dr. Franklin would only "please for remember, dat his head had not de honeer to be made in Paree. No, no! for if it had been made in Paree, it not bin more dan half such a head. None of the French noblesse," he declared, "had a head any ting like his. Not de great Duke d'Orleans, nor de grand monarque himself had half such a head as Docteer Frankline." And he did not see, he said, "what business anybody had wid a head more big dan de head of de great monarque."

Pleased to see the poor wigmaker recover his good humor, Dr. Franklin could not find it in his heart to put a check to his childish rant, but related one of his fine anecdotes, which struck the wigmaker with such an idea of his wit, that as he retired, bowing most profoundly, he shrugged his shoulders, and with a look most significantly arch, he said:

"Ah, Docteer Frankline! Docteer Frankline! I no wonder your head too big for my wig. I 'fraid your head be too big for all de French nationg."

OUR FIRST FLAG.

As a nation we are the most pictorial in the world, and we began early to read from symbols, our first standard of independent rule being the design of a rattlesnake cut in thirteen pieces, representing the thirteen colonies, bearing first the motto, "Unite or die," and later the signifi-

cant warning, "Dont tread on me," the rattlesnake being typified in an attitude prepared to strike.

Dr. Franklin, seeing the emblem one day wrote of it in this admirable explanation:

"On inquiry and from study I learn that the ancients considered the serpent an emblem of wisdom, and in some attitudes of endless duration. Also, that countries are often represented by animals peculiar to that country.

The rattlesnake is found nowhere but in America. Her eye is exceedingly bright and without eyelids—emblem of vigilance. She never begins an attack and she never surrenders—emblem of magnanimity and courage.

She never wounds even her enemies until she generously gives them warning not to tread on her, which is emblematical of the spirit of the people who inhabit her country. She appears apparently weak and defenseless, but her weapons are neverthelss formidable. Her poison is the necessary means for the digestion of her food but certain death to her enemies—showing the power of American resources.

Her thirteen rattles, the only part which increases in number, are distinct from each other, and yet so united that they cannot be disconnected without breaking them to pieces—showing the impossibility of an American republic without a union of states.

A single rattle will give no sound alone, but the ringing of the thirteen together is sufficient to startle the boldest man alive. She is beautiful in youth, and her beauty increases with age. He tongue is forked as the lightning, and her abode is among the impenetrable rocks."

THE STORY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

FOR A SCHOOL OR CLUB PROGRAMME.

Each numbered paragraph is to be given to a pupil or member to read, or to recite, in a clear, distinct tone.

If the school or club is small, each person may take three or four paragraphs, but should not be required to recite them in succession.

1. Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston, January 17, 1706.

2. His father, Josiah Franklin, was of English descent. He was an excellent man, of a firm and healthy texture of character, "fond of mechanical operations, skilled in drawing and much given to music.

3. Franklin says of him, "He turned our attention to what was good, just and prudent in the conduct of life." At the age of eighty-nine years he died, honored by all who knew him.

4. Franklin's mother was Abiah Folger, a daughter of Peter Folger, one of the early settlers of New England, whom Cotton Mather styled "a godly and learned Englishman." He was a writer



Birthplace of Franklin, Milk Street,
Boston, Mass.

of political verses, and a zealous opponent of the persecution of the Quakers.

5. His mother lived to be eighty-five years of age, bequeathing to her son Benjamin her splendid physical traits.

6. When young Benjamin was eight years old he was sent to the Boston Grammar School. He was a ready learner, and made rapid progress in his classes, rising from one to the other.

7. Such was his precocity that his father thought of sending him to Harvard College and educating him for the ministry. But the wants of his large family were so numerous that he could not afford the expense of this.

8. At the age of ten years, his father took him into his chandlery to teach him his own trade, but it was so distasteful to the boy that he was permitted, two years later, to become an apprentice to his brother James, a printer.

9. This action of his father prevented the carrying out of Benjamin's desire to run away and go to sea.

10. His natural fondness for knowledge made him an insatiable reader. He devoured all the books he could borrow, and would often pass the greater part of the night in reading or study.

11. The few shillings that found their way into his hands were all laid out in books instead of sweetmeats, of which children are generally so fond. Daniel Defoe, the author of "Robinson Crusoe," "The Pilgrim's Progress," "Plutarch's Lives," were among his favorites. But soon he was studying Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," and the Port Royal Logic, heavy works for one of his tender years.

12. When Benjamin was fifteen years of age, his brother James began to print the "New England Courant," the third newspaper published in Boston and the fourth in America.

13. For this paper young Franklin wrote anonymous articles of great merit, which were attributed to men of eminence in the colony.

14. To improve his style Benjamin read "The Spectator," and endeavored to imitate it. He was careful and laborious in his writings, and in the end acquired a style noted for its singular purity and simplicity.

15. The "New England Courant" soon got into trouble, for the freedom with which men and events were handled by Benjamin.

16. In 1723 the General Court ordered that the paper should not be published, "except it first be supervised."

17. When he was seventeen years old Franklin resolved to leave Boston and seek his fortune elsewhere; and in October, 1723, set sail in a sloop for New York.

18. Unable to find employment in New York, he set out for Philadelphia, which he reached after many hardships and adventures.

19. With hands sorely blistered from rowing, with but a dollar in his pocket, and without a friend he began life in the Quaker city.

20. With a roll under each arm, and eating a third, he set out in search of a lodging and employment.

21. There were but two printers in Philadelphia at this time, and one of them, a Mr. Keimer, took him into his primitive printing establishment.

22. He took comfortable lodgings in the house of a Mr. Read, with whose charming daughter, Deborah, he soon fell in love.

23. Sir William Keith, the Governor of Pennsylvania, became attracted to Franklin, and invited him to his house, giving him also the free use of his library.

24. The Governor advised him to set up a printing establishment of his own, and urged him to make a voyage to London to purchase the necessary articles, promising to assist him and give him letters of introduction.

25. When the ship sailed, the letter-bag was opened, but not a scrap from the Governor did it contain. Franklin, therefore, reached London in the spring of 1724, in as destitute a plight as he had landed in Philadelphia.

26. But he worked hard at his printer's trade for a little more than two years in London, and saved the greater part of his wages.

27. In the autumn of 1726 he made his way back to Philadelphia, and in 1729 became editor and proprietor of the "Pennsylvania Gazette," which he made very popular.

28. On September 1, 1730, he married Miss Deborah Read, and lived most happily with her until her death, December 19, 1774.

29. Though devoting himself assiduously to business he continued his literary pursuits, and organized, in 1731, a club called "The Junto," composed of acquaintances of congenial tastes. Out of this grew the idea in Franklin's mind of a public library, which afterwards developed into that noble institution, the Philadelphia Library.

30. In 1732 he began the publication of the famous "Poor Richard's Almanac," which he continued to issue regularly for twenty-five years.

31. In 1736 he was made Clerk of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and in 1737 was appointed postmaster of Philadelphia, and introduced into that office the excellent system with which he managed all his affairs.

32. In 1738 he organized a fire company, the first of the kind ever established in this country.

33. In 1742 he invented the "open stove for the better warming of rooms," an invention which is still in use.

34. In 1744 Franklin proposed a volunteer association for the

protection of the Province against the savages, and at one time held the command of the Pennsylvania volunteers.

35. In 1747 he was elected to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and continued a member of that body for ten years.

36. In 1752 he made his renowned experiment in electricity by flying a kite of silk during a thunder storm. He received the degree of M. A. from Harvard and Yale Colleges.

37. In 1753 he was appointed Deputy Postmaster-General of the British Colonies, on account of his excellent management of the Philadelphia Post Office.



Philadelphia Library, Founded by Franklin.
(From an Old Print.)

38. In 1754 Franklin became a conspicuous figure in Continental politics, and was sent to the Congress at Albany as a Commissioner from Pennsylvania.

39. At the Albany Congress Franklin brought forth the first coherent scheme ever propounded for securing a permanent Federal union of the thirteen colonies. But public opinion was not yet ripe for the adoption of the bold and comprehensive ideas which it contained, and, in consequence, it was rejected.

40. In 1755, by the steadfast personal exertions of Franklin, General Braddock was enabled to obtain horses, wagons and provisions for his expedition. For the payment of these Franklin pledged his own property.

41. In 1757 Franklin was sent over to England as agent for Pennsylvania, to plead the cause of the Assembly before the privy council. The duties of the position kept him five years in England.

42. His discoveries and writings had won him now a European reputation, and in 1762 he received the degree of LL.D. from the Universities of Oxford and Edinburgh.

43. In 1764 Franklin was sent again to England as agent for Pennsylvania, and was instructed to make every effort to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act.

44. But when the obnoxious measure was passed in 1765, Franklin counselled submission. "In this case, however, the wisdom of this wisest of Americans proved inferior to the 'collective wisdom' of his fellow countrymen." The Stamp Act was soon repealed, and Franklin's testimony, in which was evinced his strong sense and varied knowledge, contributed greatly to the desired result.

45. In 1774 Franklin was tried before the privy council for his connection with the historical "Hutchinson Letters." He was vilified and abused, but bore the ordeal nobly. The infuriated King dismissed him the day after the affair, from his position of Deputy Post-master-General.

46. When the demand was made on Massachusetts for the payment of the tea destroyed in Boston Harbor, Franklin went so far as to advise Massachusetts to make the payment, fearing that war would result if it were refused.

47. Samuel Adams, on hearing of this, said: "Franklin may be a good philosopher, but he is a bungling politician." "In this instance Franklin showed himself less far-sighted than Adams and the people of Massachusetts."

48. After using all his efforts at conciliation between the King and the colonies, which he found fruitless, he returned to America, arriving in Philadelphia May 5, 1775, to find the shedding of blood had just begun.

49. When the news of the Battle of Bunker Hill reached him, he wrote to his friends in England, "Americans will fight, England has lost her colonies forever."

50. When Samuel Adams proposed his plan for a confederation the colonies, which did not meet with general approval, that sturdy patriot said, "If none of the rest will join, I will endeavor to unite the New England colonies in confederating."

51. Franklin said to Adams, "I approve your proposal, and if you succeed I will cast in my lot among you."

52. Franklin earnestly supported the proposition for a Declaration of Independence, and affixed his signature to it on July 4, 1776. He said, with grim humor, after the signing, "Now, gentlemen, we must all hang together, or we shall hang separately."

53. By never wasting time Franklin had acquired a knowledge of the French language, with Italian and Spanish also, besides getting some acquaintance with the Latin. He was thus fitted for the important position of Commissioner Plenipotentiary to the Court of France in 1776, at the age of seventy-one.

54. He became the most popular man in Paris, and was overwhelmed with attentions from the learned, the nobility and the common people. He rendered, while in France, the most signal services to his beloved country.

55. He returned to America in 1785, and was soon after elected President of the Supreme Executive Council of Philadelphia—the Chief Executive of the State. He was twice re-elected, his last term expiring in October, 1788. He was a delegate to the Federal Convention of 1787, which framed the Constitution of the United States.

56. On April 17, 1790, this distinguished American passed away at the age of eighty-four years and three months.

57. The mortal remains of Franklin were laid away to rest in the northwest portion of Christ churchyard at the corner of 5th and Arch Streets, Philadelphia, under a plain marble stone, inscribed, "Benjamin and Deborah Franklin."

58. We can truly say of Franklin, "He was at once philosopher, statesman, diplomatist, scientific discoverer, inventor, philanthropist, moralist and wit; while, as a writer of English, he was surpassed by few men of his time. He is in many respects, the greatest of Americans, and one of the greatest men whose names are recorded in history."

PROGRAMME FOR A FRANKLIN EVENING.

1. Music.
2. Anecdotes of Franklin.
3. Essay—Franklin's Youth and Apprenticeship. Discussion of same.
4. Reading of Extracts from Poor Richard's Almanac.
5. Music—Vocal or Instrumental.
6. Essay—The first American Flag, and Franklin's Interpretation of its Meaning. Discussion of the same.
7. Essay—"*Eripint cælo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.*" Translated: "He snatched the lightning from heaven and the scepter from tyrants."
8. Music.
9. Franklin as a Diplomatist.
10. Song—"America."

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

Where is the tablet that marks the birthplace of Benjamin Franklin? What was the name of Franklin's father? Of what stock did his family come? What was their station?

What was the name of Franklin's mother? Of what stock did she come?

What may be said of the hereditary traits of Franklin? What is said of Josiah's favorite brother? What did Benjamin's father intend him to be? To what occupation was he assigned? What were the books he read? In what circumstances did he become a printer?

How did he correct the faults of composition? What unorthodox books did he read? How did Franklin come into notice as a writer? Why did he take ship for New York, and when?

In what condition did he arrive in Philadelphia? What event specially marked his entrance?

How did he come to the notice of the Governor? What was the reason of his return to Boston, and its result? How did Franklin come to go to England? With what result? What were the chief features of his life in London?

In what spirit did he return to America? What was the famous epitaph Franklin composed? What were the chief features of his relations to his partners in printing? What was Franklin's relation to business advertising? How did Franklin increase the circulation of his paper? What was the beginning of American debating societies? One of the chief questions Franklin favored?

When and to whom was Franklin married? When was the turning point in Franklin's career? What were the chief features in his new life?

For what was Franklin remarkable? What is said of his establishment of a public library? What is said of Franklin's wife? Of their mode of living? Of his tendency to free thinking? Of his use of a Liturgy? Of his struggle after moral perfection?

What is said of "Poor Richard's Almanac"? Of Franklin's study of languages? Of chess? Of music?

How did his political promotion begin? What is said of Whitefield? Of the Franklin Stove? Of the American Philosophical Society? Of Franklin's love of nature? Of plain truth? Of Franklin as a soldier? Of the Quakers and defensive warfare? Of the different positions Franklin filled? Of his various schemes? Of plaster as a fertilizer? Of his work as postmaster? Of the degrees conferred upon him? Of his appointment as Commissioner? Of Franklin's "Short Hints"? Of his relations with Governor Shirley? Of his letters on "no taxation without representation?"

What is said of Braddock's campaign? Of Franklin's discoveries in electricity? Of his relations to the proprietaries of Pennsylvania?

ia? To Loudon? Of his visit to England and the persons he met there? Of the fall of Quebec? Of Franklin's return home? Of Franklin's son William? Of Franklin's relation to John Penn? Of his pamphlet on "Cool Thoughts," etc.? Of the wider fields of Franklin's operations? Of the Stamp Act? Of Franklin's mistake in favoring it?

What is said of Franklin as a witness before Parliament? Of the repeal of the Stamp Act? Of the stories afloat as to America? Of the indifference to American affairs in England? Of interest in France? Of his relation to Whitefield? To Samuel Adams? Of Franklin's enemies? Of the admission by England of her error? Of the effect upon the colonies? Of Franklin's efforts to promote good will? Of various English statesmen? Of Franklin's relations to them? Of Franklin's children and grandchildren? Of Mrs. Franklin? Of Franklin's varied discoveries, etc.?

What is said of Franklin's English acquaintances? Of the Royal Society? Of "The Hutchinson Letters?" Of the attempt to bribe Franklin? Of Arthur Lee? Of Franklin's return home? Of his relations to Strahan? To Dr. Priestley? Of his services as delegate? Of his love of jokes? Of his plan of union? Of his various positions and constructions?

What is said of the operations of Deane and Beaumarchais in France? Of Franklin's risk in trying to reach France? Of the relations of Deane and Lee to each other? Of the cause of Deane's recall? Of Franklin's estimate of him? Of privateering and Franklin's relation to it? Of Franklin and Vergennes? Of the capture of prisoners? Of Franklin and Thomas Morris? Of Franklin and Arthur Lee?

What is said of the year 1777? Of the meeting of the commissioners? Of the journey of Austin to France? Of the meeting at Versailles? Of Franklin and Gerard? Of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States? Of the bill of Lord North? Of the action by Congress? Of the mission of Austin to England? Of the treaty of commerce? Of Voltaire and Franklin? What was the general estimate of Lee? What is said of John Adams? Of the attempt to ruin Franklin? Of John Paul Jones? Of Franklin's financial duties and difficulties? Of Arthur Lee and Izard? Of Congress and William Temple Franklin? Of Congress and Franklin? Of Adams and Vergennes? Of the efforts of England to reach an understanding with the United States?

Of his financial circumstances? Of Franklin as a joker? Of John Fitch? Of the letter to his friend? Of his letter to Thomas Paine? Of his interest in education? Of Shay's rebellion? Of the Constitutional Convention? Of Franklin's attitude? Of his remark about the sun? Of his wish for prayers for the daily sessions? Of his action after adjournment? Of his further election and consequent remarks? Of the French Revolution? Of Franklin's relation to slavery? What is said of Spain? Of Jay when he reached Paris? Of

Jay and Vergennes? Of Jay's difference with Franklin? Of Jay and Adams? Of Shelburne? Of Franklin and Adams? Of Franklin in 1782 and 1785? Of Jefferson as Franklin's successor? Of Franklin as he returned home? Of his reception in Philadelphia? Of his further election to office? Of his death? Of his sentiment in France? Of Franklin's attractiveness? Of his intellectual and moral powers? Of the change in his attitude toward moral and religious truth?

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL STUDY.

1. *Franklin as a Boy.*
2. *Franklin as a Printer.*
3. *Franklin as Postmaster-General.*
4. *Franklin as a Moralist and Wit.*
5. *Franklin as a Scientist.*
6. *Franklin's Relations with the English Parliament.*
7. *Franklin as a Minister Plenipotentiary to France.*
8. *Franklin's Relations to Education.*
9. *Franklin as a Soldier.*
10. *Franklin and the Hutchinson Letters.*
11. *Franklin as a Philanthropist.*
12. *Franklin as a Statesman.*

CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF FRANKLIN.

- 1706 Franklin was born in Boston, Mass., Jan. 17.
- 1715 Sent to Boston Grammar School.
- 1718 Apprenticed to his brother James as a printer.
- 1721 Began writing articles for the "New England Courant."
- 1723 Set sail for New York. Reached Philadelphia. Returned to Boston to solicit aid for printing.
- 1724 Went to England at Sir William Keith's request.
- 1726 Returned to Philadelphia.
- 1729 Established in printing business at Philadelphia.
- 1730 Married Miss Read, Sept. 1. Established Debating Society, which afterwards became the American Philosophical Society.
- 1731 Founded the Philadelphia Library.
- 1732 Began publishing "Poor Richard's Almanac."
- 1736 Elected Clerk of the Assembly of Pennsylvania.
- 1738 Organized the first fire company in the country.
- 1742 Invented the Franklin or "Open Stove."
- 1743 Projected the University, which afterwards became the University of Pennsylvania.
- 1744 Assisted in organizing a Volunteer Association for the defense of the Province.
- 1747 Elected to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, of which he continued a member for ten years.

- 1753 Appointed Deputy Postmaster-General for the Continent.
- 1754 Began to serve in the Continental Congress. Brought forward plan for a Federal Union.
- 1755 Assisted General Braddock in obtaining money and supplies.
- 1757 Sent by the Assembly to England.
- 1762 Received the degree of LL.D. from Oxford and Edinburgh Universities. Received the formal thanks of the Assembly.
- 1764 Sent again to England.
- 1774 The celebrated affair of the "Hutchinson Letters."
- 1775 Elected unanimously by the Assembly of Pennsylvania to the Second Continental Congress, May 6.
- 1776 Sent to join with Arthur Lee and Silas Deane, in securing the co-operation of France.
- 1778 Signing of the Treaty of Paris, mainly by Franklin's efforts.
- 1783 Signing of the Treaty, by which a large portion of the continent was secured to the United States, in which the tact of Franklin was signally displayed. Negotiation of a treaty with Prussia.
- 1785-87 Returned to America. Elected President of Pennsylvania, and twice re-elected.
- 1787 Elected delegate to the Federal Convention.
- 1789 Signed Memorial to Congress as President of an Anti-Slavery Society, to abolish slavery.
- 1790 Died in Philadelphia, April 17.

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